

Stuck in the middle

Home-making strategies of Mexican middling migrants

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctorado en Antropología de Orientación Pública

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

2012

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The Mexican footsteps in Madrid

There are the mass media images of contemporary Mexico. Posters of "Los tigres del norte" a folk music band that I only heard back in Mexico while I was riding the bus, are suddenly plastered all over Madrid's walls. The local channels are broadcasting all too familiar images of cheesy telenovelas my granddad would be watching back in Mexico. Their newspapers are reporting news from Mexico, as if what is happening in my country matters also to them.

A huge poster of Chichen Itzá across Plaza de España, invites tourists to visit the country stating that "There are many Mexicos. Discover yours". Then, we start to walk back home and in one of the sidewalks of Gran Vía there is a "bolero" polishing shoes. "Bolero" is the Mexican term for a person dedicated to polish shoes and boots for a living, a shoe shiner or boot polisher for the rest of the world. If you happen to walk down Gran Vía, you will not only see a Mexican Bolero, you will see "the best Mexican Bolero in Spain".

Then we end up in Sol, at the heart of Madrid, and we cross the square that marks the beginning of the city. The song "Mexico Lindo y Querido" resonates in the square and I see a bunch of people surrounding a group of Mariachis. They are singing what is perhaps one of the most heartfelt songs about Mexico. With grave and deep voices they are explaining to the crowd that if they happen to die away from Mexico, people should pretend they are asleep until they bring them back home. My partner half jokingly tells me that the band members are from Ecuador, and right there, I hear for the first time something I will hear time and again throughout my stay in Madrid: Mexicans here, are usually postgraduate students and professionals.

Then we walk through Carrera de San Jerónimo, trying to get to his house. Suddenly, there is a group of policemen blocking the transit. *There must be something going on at the Congress*, my partner tells me, and then he keeps on walking and approaches a policeman.

-We are going to the Mexican Embassy (Oh, Are we?)

And then, the policeman let us pass. I am impressed. We keep on walking between policemen and bodyguards, while my partner tries to give me some information regarding the Congress.

Sure, sure. Where is the Mexican Embassy? I ask.

The Mexican Embassy is located right in front of the Congress, between the "Congress Shop" and a bank, and it surely makes a statement. It stands there, right between the buildings that host the Spanish legislative branch, at the heart of the city and away from the usual places where Embassies are located. It might be my imagination but I am left under the impression that the Mexican government has a particular interest in Spain.

Who are these Mexicans and why are they in Madrid? Why does it feel like Mexico in here?

Those, were the first of the many questions I have asked myself throughout the course of this research.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología in Mexico sponsored the totality of my postgraduate studies, from September 2006 through July 2012. I am grateful for this invaluable opportunity and for the trust (and money) they invested in me.

As for the moral support, I am grateful to my network of people in Mexico, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the U.S. You are my family, old and new. To the parents and the partner. And to the links that bind us across distance.

INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to feel at home in a globalized world? How does movement and change affect the forms of individual and collective dwelling? These questions become pertinent within the context of globalization where traditional concepts of "home and away" and the "self and the other", are constantly being challenged not only in the communities anthropologists study, but also within the discipline of anthropology itself.

Some of us have read and reproduced *ad nauseam* Edward Said's (1980) famous quote of the world experiencing "*generalized condition of homelessness*"(62) to start discussions around displacement. It is a good quote that makes us relate to the plight of refugees, exiles and asylum seekers: What would it feel like to be forced out of your home?

In our daily lives we might have seen or heard things that use the concept of home to send a message across. From the products in the aisles of the super market telling us that they are like "homemade", promising an old fashioned recipe that stands out from all the generic products in the same aisle; to a graffiti painted on a street wall demanding foreigners to "go back home!" implying that their home is somewhere else, not here. We might have heard the public discourse of a politician promising to "clean the house", the collective house, either from corruption or more hauntingly, from the "undesired". We probably have heard many times the voice of a loved one urging us to "come back home", independently of whether we are fifteen minutes away, or fifteen hours away. We could be the ones saying, writing and buying those things. It seems that in our times, home is everywhere yet for some, home is no longer here.

From the perspective of a researcher, more over, from the perspective of an anthropological researcher, having a topic that people feel close to, is a good thing. After all, we are interested in what people have to say about their lives. But researching a topic that is in the mouth of

everyone can cause suspicion: Is it too ordinary? Is it too politicized? Is it worth it? Well, the answer is yes, to every question.

The topic of home is ordinary because it is part of the everyday life and it has been politicized because without the need to say it out loud, it resonates with the idea of belonging and place: Who belongs here and who does not. It is worth it precisely because it impacts the lives of many people and it needs to be reclaimed. This, because at least in the public arena it seems it has been co-opted by essentialist, reactionary and exclusionary discourses that seem to want to send everyone back to their "rightful" homes: women to the domestic sphere because they don't belong in the workplace; non-normative sexualities into hetero-normativity, their practices are out-of-place; post-colonial subjects to the periphery because they don't belong to the homelands in the center, so on and so forth.

This work explores the intersection between movement, place and belonging, at an individual and collective level, and the way in which this changes overtime. It uses a transnational perspective, which problematizes the traditional associations of home with fixity and stability.

Specifically, this work explores the migratory process as an overarching home-making experience, through the everyday experiences of the middling migrant and it is written against the backdrop of a geographically mobile middle class, which is using international migration strategy to improve their living conditions. Mobility in this context can be used as exit strategy from alienating conditions in their own countries, think about retirees in Costa del Sol or (some) queer migrations. But it can also be used as a strategy of class reproduction in a world where traditional means of distinction, such as secondary and tertiary education, are blurring.

As a Mexican researcher in Madrid I am taking advantage of my embeddedness within a particular community of immigrants in Madrid. Although the Mexican community in the city is rather small, some of its characteristics make it an interesting object of study. Since they come from a predominantly middle class background, they cannot be framed as economic or

elite migrants. In this sense the study also explores the experiences of "middling" actors in a transnational setting.

The work departs from an open concept of home and place that allows to trace the journeys and home-making experiences of middling actors at different scales. By adopting a transnational lens, the analysis includes the role of the nation-state in what is traditionally framed as a private and individual experience of belonging: the home-making experiences. In this sense, the work reflects how the actors are embedded within a process of globalization, marked by the flexibility of movement of capital, information, goods and people.

The thesis, thus, is oriented towards looking at the migration process as an over-arching home-making experience that is related to questions of identity formation and reproduction at different scales. It departs from the understanding of the lived experiences of the middling actors: how they experience place, how they structure their presence in the public and private spheres and how their personal journeys are marked by a set of privileges, constraints and values.

In chapter 1, "Becoming a (native) anthropologist", I describe my own shifting position in the field. This chapter helps to situate the research within broader discussions in anthropology about the very essence of what doing anthropology in the context of rapid socio-cultural change means, specially for those whose sense of belonging blurs the distinction between "home and away" on which ethnographic fieldwork is conventionally founded. It provides a starting point to discuss the context in which this research takes place: who is the population that is being studied, how and why.

Chapter 2, "Context of the study" provides a general overview of Mexican migration into Spain. It starts by a review of the historical, economic and social context in which this migration takes place, and it is followed by a review their demographic profile. It outlines the way in which such relationship has changed in the context of neoliberalism and how the accumulation of economic capital marks this relationship in a very substantial way.

Chapter 3, "Home", explores the contemporary debate around place, identity and belonging. It starts by problematization of the concept of home that allows us to understand it beyond these notions of fixity and stability. As a whole, this chapter sets up the tone for the rest of the work. It explores the relationship between place and the different scales of belonging in the context of heightened interconnection and change. In this sense, the home making experience is seen as a multi-layered and multi-scalar phenomenon that allows the exploration of the different scales of belonging in the experience of migration.

In chapter 4 "Conceptual toolkit for the study of home (away from home)" I explain the theoretical lenses and categories that guide the work. I use the concept of transnational social field in order to explore a multilayered and multi-scalar phenomenon as the home-making practices in the context of mobility. In this transnational social field, the stakes for actors embedded in middling positions are set by a need to reproduce a middle class identity. This reproduction is shaped by a series of privileges and constraints that are related to a flexible market and the governability of moving populations.

Chapter 5, " Our home: the roots and roots of Mexican identity", explores the way in which the collective home of Mexicans was constructed. It contains an historical focus that traces the ethno-racial stratification derived from the colonial period and that penetrates the home-making process at an individual level. Such home-making strategies are marked by a process of constant differentiation from the other under very specific terms. In general it evidences an internal form of colonialism that marks the home-making experiences of Mexicans at home and abroad.

In chapter 6 "Migration channels: from traitors to heroes, of friends and foes" I continue the analysis by looking at the way in which the belonging to the nation was reframed in the context of neoliberalism. Within the logics of capitalist accumulation, middling transnational actor, become key players in positioning the country within the reconfiguration of geopolitical and economical vectors of power. It starts introducing my informants through a classification of the motives behind the relocation and the migration channels.

Chapter 8 "Channels of incorporation" continues with the description of the relationship

between my informants and Madrid, by looking at their incorporation into the local labor market. In the context of middling migration, the home-making experiences are marked by a necessity to reproduce a middle class identity. This is reflected in the strategies of incorporation into the city's labor market and the way in which this incorporation is shaped by a fractured belonging. This part of the work describes how middling Mexicans in Madrid are engaged in a balancing act between remaining loyal to the nation while taking advantage of contemporary schemes of mobility and flexibility.

In chapter 7 "Dispositions towards the outside: From la Malinche to el Jamaicón" I follow the tension between a narrowly defined belonging to the nation-state *vis a vis* the necessity of flexible dispositions towards the outside and its reproduction within the community. Though the use of the myth in the anthropological sense, I explore how this tension shapes the relationship of Mexican middling migrants with the Outside. This chapter highlights the continuous challenge to the idea of a rooted belonging and a negotiation with the routes found in Madrid. And it explores the way in which structural constraints and privileges shape these dispositions.

The concluding chapter of this work, chapter 9 "The experience of home overtime", tries to answer the question: How does movement and change affect the forms of individual and collective dwelling? The analysis is tied down by providing an overview of the individual home-making experiences at three levels: the body, the household and the community. It shows how this process is marked by a tension between two places and the ambivalent feelings they produce.

So this work is about home, about that special place(s) in our everyday lives that seems to be in the mouth of everyone, sometimes to exclude and alienate, and sometimes to include and make us feel... at home. It is not much about what it is being argued for but about what it is being argued *against*, which is the basic and commonly held premise that identities and places are fixed, and that somehow our feelings of belonging give us the right to negate those same feelings to Others.

1.BECOMING A (native) ANTHROPOLOGIST

I have been living outside the country where I was born for the past six years. Throughout those years I have had a close and changing relationship with Madrid. At first, Madrid was my playground. For the past four years, it has been my fieldwork site. And for the past three years, it has been (sometimes) my home. In sum, I am a relatively privileged Mexican living in Madrid whose research is on other relatively privileged Mexicans living in the city. It is clear that I am not only researching a subject that it is close to me, but in a sense I am also researching myself.

The statement about my own shifting position in the field, has a double purpose. On the one hand, it helps to situate the research within broader discussions in anthropology about the very essence of what doing anthropology in the context of rapid socio-cultural change means, specially for those whose sense of belonging blurs the distinction between "home and away" on which ethnographic fieldwork is conventionally founded. On the other hand, it provides a starting point to discuss the context in which this research takes place, by taking advantage of my own position in the field.

This is not the place to discuss the historical and methodological trajectory of the discipline at length but it is necessary to point out that as a colonial enterprise, traditional anthropology was conceived as an in depth sight into the lives of Others and fieldwork based on participant observation became not only the primary data gathering technique but, in the words of Stockings (1992) *"the basic constituent experience both of anthropologists and anthropological knowledge"* (cited in Gupta and Ferguson, 1997: 3).

Anthropological inquiry delves into social phenomena from the perspective of the agents involved. As such, the empirical data that informs anthropological research must be collected at a close range and has to account not only the practices of the agents but in a sense, needs an

understanding of the logics inherent to such practices as well. The overall experience of data gathering at a close range is what we understand as ethnographic fieldwork.

The archetype of ethnographic fieldwork is based on a heightened idea of distance/proximity between the self (the anthropologist) and the other (the subjects of inquiry). Under this logic, an anthropologist who studies other societies is expected to become a "partial insider" by spending a long period of time away from home and in the field (Ghorashi, 2003; Guber, 2011: 15-50).

Archetypically, the place from where the anthropologist departs, home, is construed as a place of cultural sameness while the place where the data is collected (the field) is to be found abroad (cf. Gupta and Ferguson, 1997:17). The idea behind this archetype is that the anthropologist is so unfamiliar with the logics and the dynamics in the field, that the entrance into it becomes a process in which the researcher is almost re-socialized and as a consequence becomes able to understand things from the perspective of the "native" (Guber, 2011).

However, in practice distance and proximity are relative terms. In varying degrees and depending on the context and its prevailing vectors of power, the anthropologist might find that what was construed as different or distant in the comfort of academia, can be more close and familiar once the experience of doing fieldwork begins. The opposite might just happen as well.

The relativity of distance and proximity within anthropological inquiry becomes more evident with the processes of decolonization and globalization the world has witnessed in recent decades. For increasing numbers of people, including anthropologists, the experiences of "home and away" do not necessarily coincide with the idea of home as a place of cultural sameness versus the idea of away as an encounter with the other. In this context it is important to raise the question of "considering culture as detached from a territorially bounded location (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992) and as not being synonymous with difference (Rosaldo, 1989)" (Suárez-Navaz, 2004: 17).

This idea becomes even more pertinent when thinking about those anthropologists whose research interests do not involve the study of the Other in the traditional sense. Increasingly

we can find within the academic context what Gupta and Ferguson call "minorities, postcolonial and halfies" (1997:17) whose own dislocated or multi-located belongings might place them in different positions within the fields they constructed to study. For them (for us) doing anthropology does not mean the exploration of the Other, but the opportunity to add complexity to the understanding of various peoples and places, through the multiple planes of identification that in some contexts can draw us closer, but can thrust us apart in some others (Narayan, 1993: 676). What this multiple planes of identification show, is that in some cases anthropologists are not completely "at home", in the traditional sense of the world, but also they are not necessarily "away" either. Thus,

Instead of a royal road to holistic knowledge of another society, ethnography is beginning to become recognizable as a flexible and opportunistic strategy for diversifying and making more complex our understanding of various places, people, and predicaments through a different attentiveness (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997: 39)

In general, anthropological inquiry, demands a special kind of self-awareness and reflexivity from the researcher that involves making explicit some of the crosscutting identifications, which might influence the shifting positions as both researchers and individuals during fieldwork and the process of writing (Rosaldo, 1993; Narayan, 1993; Ghorashi, 2003). In the case of what has been called the "native" anthropologist, its own position in the field allows for the inclusion of different perspectives that can enrich anthropological inquiry.

1.1 MINORITY, POSTCOLONIAL AND HALFY

After presenting the preliminary results of the research I am now concluding, a Cambridge PhD student approached me and asked if I was Mexican. When I answered yes, she told me I had to be, because of my research. She was a California girl from Pasadena, who had a slight British accent that to my untrained ears sounded a bit Australian, and according to her, Irish when hailing a cab. She had her money in to something but it actually was quite the opposite.

Yes, I am doing this research because I am indeed Mexican, but mainly because I don't feel SO Mexican most of the time, not even when I spent fifteen years without leaving the country, not once.

It was when I moved to Amsterdam, in 2006, that insistent questions surrounding my ethnic background and my "Mexicaness" forced me to explain to others and to question myself where did I REALLY belong. Although even now, the questions about the nationality and ethnic background of my entire family tree seem a little bit absurd and out of place, the Dutch obsession, and I might say the world's obsession with the question of belonging intrigued me. Nearly at the end of a conversation that would start by questioning my Mexican identity, I revealed that my grandparents were indeed Chinese and that maybe I had only one passport and one nationality, but more than one attachment to different places. The external inquiries around my belonging made me question myself: Where is home and how do we and, more importantly how do others, define where our home is? Was it really the "blood" as some right wing politicians were trying to make it?

I partly come from an immigrant family. On the one hand, my paternal grandparents arrived in Mexico at the beginning of the 20th Century. Around fifty percent of "my blood" is Chinese although I have never been to China and for the dismay of most of the people who ask me, I have no interest in going at all, or at least no more interest than going to another "exotic country" such as maybe Ghana or Australia.

On the other hand my mother is Mexican, her parents, her grandparents and just maybe, her great grandparents were Mexican as well. As it is with most Mexican families, whether they like to admit it or not, there must be some "Indigenous blood" and some "European blood" in the mix. The point is, my mother's side of the family, can be said, is quite Mexican. They have been cooking the same food with the same ingredients generation after generation, and can trace back their origins from being farm workers in the northwestern part of Mexico, to being textile workers in the center of the country, to be relatively successful middle class housewives and-or professionals in the same area.

My Chinese grandparents, as most immigrants do, had to struggle to make a living but managed to survive thanks to a small cafeteria. It can be said that Mexico provided a great deal of social mobility to a family of Chinese immigrants. Nearly 80 years passed by since my grand parents ship docked in the North-Western part of Mexico, and since then the country has gone through incredible changes. My dad, uncles and aunts had to renounce to any possibility of holding dual nationality in order to gain Mexican citizenship, even though all of them were born and raised in the country. My brother and most of my cousins, belong to the first generation of Mexicans to hold a dual nationality and have the legal right to live and to vote in two different countries.

I always thought that mobility was an inherent part of human experience and that my family history was no different from the histories of millions of people around the world: people move and have links to a myriad of places. And I stand by that idea. Why all of those questions? Why does one need to belong here and not there? Why the fact that we feel we belong here and there automatically washes down all belongings? As much as the public and sometimes private discourse pushes the idea of belonging as a clear-cut experience, the fact is people have attachments to different places, even those who apparently remain put. What might be changing is that with an increasing mobility and technological change, keeping the artificial boundaries of a world divided in nation-states is more and more difficult. People are moving back and forth, not only keeping their various links to place alive but also changing the apparently static character of the places they remain attached to. They are choosing to belong here and there (and sometimes everywhere!) and on top of that they are pushing for the social and legal recognition those ambivalent links.

1.2 MADRID, MY HEAVEN

It was never in my plans to become an anthropologist, but being an opportunist, is something that I have always enjoyed thoroughly.

Since 2006, I had been living away from what I used to call home and I was spending my time between two very distinct places: Amsterdam and Madrid. Even on the surface both cities are undeniably different. One is in Northern Europe surrounded by canals, the other, is beyond what was until recently conceived to be the last southern European frontier: the Pyrenees. One is like your old and rich wacky aunt while the other one is like your young and upcoming cousin who is awakening after a big night out. But beyond that, for me, Amsterdam was a place of business and Madrid was my playground. While I studied in Amsterdam, I felt at home in Madrid.

Every time the protestant working ethics of the Netherlands gave me a time out I would catch a plane and would end up in the middle of Barajas airport, where a mass of Spanish speaking persons, an undeniably blue sky in spite of the "bad" weather and a loving partner were waiting for me.

I would be back in Amsterdam in a few days (or even weeks) with rosy cheeks and a bag filled with souvenirs from my "home away from home", just like I used to do when I was coming back from my parents' house to my college apartment. A bunch of new clothes bought in one of the many Spanish fashion stores that nowadays plague big cities over the world (but way cheaper), a few cans of precious Mexican salsa verde bought in El Corte Inglés, and a myriad of memories that often involved a group of Mexican friends cracking jokes that only "we" understood and thought were funny.

Some immigrants often go to or even live in "ethnic" neighborhoods that make them feel "at home" because of the language, the products being sold in local stores or the costumes they reproduce in their new places of residence. In Amsterdam, besides the Sint Nicholaas Kerk that every Sunday offered a service in Spanish and the occasional Tex-Mex diner in the supermarket, having a place to retreat and feel a little bit at home was difficult, even more because I am neither a catholic nor a fan of Tex-Mex food. So, in Amsterdam I started to embrace some of the things my dad infused on my childhood: White rabbits. When I was feeling down I would walk towards the Red Light District, where a series of Asian Specialty Stores were located, and would buy a pack of Chinese soft candy wrapped on sticky rice (the

white rabbits) which would immediately comfort me. In that situation, the feeling of home was entrenched with a family history of migration, where the white rabbits signaled some sort of link to an ancestral home I have never visited, but that nonetheless felt familiar. Madrid on the other hand was like my little Mexico in Europe.

The appreciation of this situation was filtered by my own experience and an immediate need to find some anchorage in a time of great change in my life. But the way in which this was interpreted was also related to my own academic interests and my relationship with two different research projects. I was working on a project related to the transnationalization of organized crime, and in this situation my own country was taking the center stage of scholarly analysis. If I am being entirely honest and self-aware, my association to that project was more related to the need to keep my research close to Mexico, than to having a particular interest in organized crime itself. The second project, which was closer to my heart and academic interests but was focused on the Netherlands, explored the different meanings of home in the context of a diverse array of socio economic changes in the country. For a long time, I worked on a project that was close to Mexico while I followed the project on home from afar, until I finally found a way to reconcile both academic interests. After almost a year of travelling back and forth between Madrid and Amsterdam I realized that the solution to my dilemma had been standing outside Barajas Airport all that time: I could study the concept of home through the experience of Mexican migrants.

Mexico has been at the center of political and scholarly debate on migration for at least five decades. While the political debate is increasingly focused on policing the transit of Mexican labor in to the U.S, which is generally depicted in the media as unskilled and undocumented (Andreas, 1998), the scholarly debate has been focused on the diverse array of experiences of Mexicans who predominantly originated from rural settings. This prolific research has provided great insight on the dynamics between the center and the periphery, the raise of transnationalism from below as a way of resistance and the way in which mobility was creating immigrant circuits that linked Mexican rural areas with the most diverse places in the

U.S., just to mention some of the theoretical and empirical contributions of these diverse array of works.

A claim for a broader understanding of Mexican migration has been made since the 1990's, in the context of the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement and the raising discontent within Mexican middle classes with the state of the country, who seem to be contemplating the idea of turning into international migration as an exit strategy that was formerly adjudicated to less privileged sectors of Mexican society (Ochoa Alvarez, 2008). There are Mexicans with a wider variety of backgrounds who are migrating to the U.S and other countries, under a diverse array of motives. The Mexicans I saw in Madrid fitted in this small and (understandably so) understudied category.

Focusing on Mexican migration into Spain had many advantages. It filled in some of the blanks that were left behind in the study of Mexican migration, not only by incorporating the study of people with a wider variety of backgrounds but it also provided a much needed insight on other destination countries. Spain became a rather interesting option not only because of my own personal feelings towards the place, but because some of those apparently personal feelings were related to broader process of identity formation, cultural circuits and historical links in which I, as a Mexican, was embedded.

So, the feeling of home that Madrid inspired was beyond personal reasons such as the weather or my partner. It was inspired by a shared history that closely linked two, of the many places that have inspired feelings of home in me. On the street I could see familiar faces in the faces of total strangers: the face of some of my former classmates, my neighbors, my granddad. I would find countless Mexican restaurants that sorely failed to reproduce some of the flavors I was yearning for, but a cup of hot chocolate with a slice of *rosca de reyes*, never failed to take make me feel at home for a little while.

I am not only talking about the products of a shared and often conflicting colonial past ("*our*" *cacao*, "*their*" *pastry*?), which as a Mexican and I guess as a Latin American, can be experienced in any place Spain. Also, I am talking about more than the mere presence of Mexican people in the city, who could be considered to be out of place in a new location. I

am talking about a group of people that is carving their own place in Madrid's landscape by exploiting their transnational links, involving in many cases Mexico and Spain, but in many others, links crossing other national boundaries. I am talking about a very vivid and constantly changing presence of Mexico in Madrid. If you pay close attention to the city you can see the footsteps of Mexicans all over the place.

1.3 MADRID, MY FIELD-SITE

The first approximation to the field was made while I was living in Amsterdam and I was taking advantage of the vast information that the cyber-space offered: I started visiting websites targeting Mexicans living in Spain. In this case, the Internet was not much a research field, but an instrument to gather qualitative data on a specific population and a window that provided access to the people I wanted to research.

There was an open website (mexicanosenespaña.com), which had a forum where the participants would post questions or suggestions and the rest of the community would weight in and provide feedback. The topics ranged from house and job-hunting, to immigration procedures, to suggestions about new restaurants and places to buy Mexican products.

By looking at the posts in such website it was evident that although there were common concerns, particularly those regarding immigration procedures, the experiences of Mexicans in Spain diverged greatly depending on the specific locality where they were residing. Some of them were living in places with little immigration and felt somewhat isolated, some others were living in regions like Catalonia, Galicia or the Basque Country, where a second language added up to their experience in a new location. The webpage offered a window on the general patterns of mobility between Mexico and Spain: Mexicans living in Spain, Mexicans wanting to live in Spain, Spanish wanting to go to Mexico, Latin Americans feeling that their experiences were somewhat related to those of Mexicans. Two things became clear. The first was that out of my options, focusing the research on Madrid exclusively would facilitate the research since it was the city where the majority of the community was

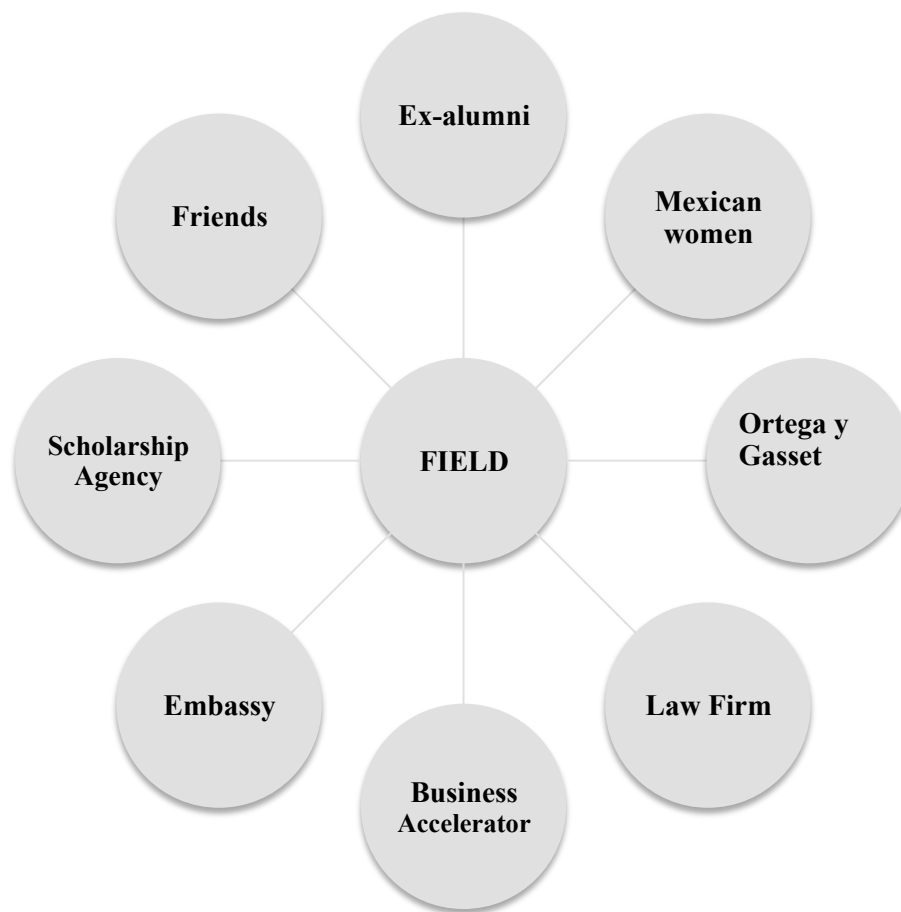
concentrated, although by doing so I was letting go of the opportunity to see how language affected the home-making process. And the second thing was that there was a substantial amount of people asking about immigration procedures that were related to student visas for postgraduate studies, legalization of diplomas and working permits, which confirmed the data that pointed out to a high proportion of Mexicans with a tertiary degree.

Eventually I found a website gathering ex-alumni from a private university in Mexico who were living in Madrid. I posted a call for voluntaries where I bluntly stated that I wanted to interview "highly-skilled immigrants" and it turned out to be hugely unsuccessful. After a period of trial and error with different wordings, I was finally able to post a call for voluntaries that had some response: I asked whether or not they felt at home¹ in Madrid and I stated that I was particularly interested in the experiences of "mobile professionals". Independently of whether or not they were "officially" immigrants, I had made the rookie mistake of not realizing how politically charged it is to call someone an immigrant and how inaccurate it is to stick to official definitions, especially in contemporary Europe, particularly if it is a (Mexican) middle-class professional.

Eventually, when I moved to Madrid I found out that there was a wider variety of Mexicans who, while in possession of a tertiary degree or its equivalent, did not fit in the narrow categories I was using. I had to find a concept that described a set of people whose only thing in common was that they had a middle class background: the middling migrant. This is a category that will be developed in the theoretical part of this work, but for the time being it suffices to say that although middling migrants tend to have high levels of formal education, the commonality in their experiences in a new place is marked by an habitus associated to middle classes in their countries of origin and not exclusively their formal education.

¹ ¿Se sienten como en su hogar y/o casa? I am aware of the fact that the concept of home and related terms has no equivalent in Spanish. This because the word home is perhaps one of the most emotionally charged words in English, while Spanish has a wider variety of words that refer to this concept. However, this problem was partially solved by explaining the goals of the research and exploring the overall relationship they had with certain places and their feelings of belonging. What was interesting is that my informants would use words in English such as home or homesickness to explain their experiences. In other cases, for example, they would use the word nostalgia or a Mexicanism "El Jamaica" to describe a longing for their homes or "Malinchismo" to describe detachment. Eventually, this language barrier proved to be useful to uncover some of the particularities in the ways in which Mexicans, as a community, experience feelings of home while abroad.

1.3.1 Networks



I started to plan my fieldwork. At the time, as it has been mentioned before, I was living in the Netherlands and because of time and money constraints, the fieldwork consisted of a series of two week stays in Madrid mixed with longer stays in the Netherlands where I would systematize the information and look at things from the distance. Since the time was limited there was a need for careful planning. The empirical evidence that informed my research would come from three different sources: the Internet (Internet-ethnography), face-to-face unstructured interviews and as much participant observation as a two week-stay at the time allowed.

At that time, my primary site of observation was the *ex-alumni* network: they were postgraduate students, transferees and professionals that were moving outside a corporate structure. The group was smaller and more cohesive, but as such, access was more complicated. In a somewhat opportunistic fashion I took advantage of the fact that I was an

alumni, albeit not living in Madrid and with a more detached relation to the University since I only studied high school there.

I started to exchange e-mails with some of them hoping that when the time came, they would be willing to spend some face-to-face time with me. In the mean time I started to have some deeper knowledge of their paths of mobility, their expectations and the overall relationship they had with Mexico and Spain (Spain seen through Madrid, to be more exact).

Once I met them in Madrid, new windows of opportunity opened up. One of the Mexicans I met, was the former manager of the ex-alumni network and told me that as the time passed by, she realized that the network was no longer useful to her since she was no longer a student and her initial troubles adapting into Spanish life were long behind her. She formed a *group of women* who kept in contact through the Internet and who met once a month to have lunch. They were mainly married young women, some were married to Spanish citizens, some others had moved to Spain with their husbands. They were also students and professionals but they had been in Spain for longer and some of them were dealing with different sets of challenges such as binational partnerships or career stagnation deriving from moving because of their husband's jobs and more over, only few of them belonged to the ex-alumni network, which provided a wider range of experiences.

Eventually when I moved to Madrid I was able to explore new ways to find informants and expand my analytical categories. I started to collect the empirical data in situ, although the Internet remained a useful tool to track the general feelings regarding some issues that arose during my stay in Madrid, for example: the 2009 H1N1 virus outbreak in Mexico, a few diplomatic incidents (one which involved a T.V. commercial for a hamburger) or the general feeling on the increasing reports of drug-related violence in Mexico.

Besides the contacts with the ex-alumni network and the group of Mexican women, I started locating places where I could meet more Mexicans. The *Instituto Ortega y Gasset*, a local think tank that has strong links to Mexico, was one of the first places I started to visit and soon it became the place where many contacts were made. It not only attracted an important volume of Mexican postgraduate students, but it also had a "Center for Studies of Mexico in

the European Union", which organized conferences that included Mexican politicians and intellectuals. While attending such events, I was able to meet journalists, students and some of the consular staff of the *Mexican Embassy* in Madrid.

From there, the links spread wider and I was able to get in contact with people working directly and indirectly with the Mexican government. I was also able to get in touch with different groups of people that performed "middling transnational" jobs such as lawyers, accountants and business administrators. There were two main organizations, a *Law Firm* and a *Business Accelerator*. Those two organizations were private projects that worked with Mexican and Spanish companies and helped them in the process of expansion of their businesses.

Ultimately, the method that proved to be more efficient was engaging my own (small) *group of friends* and acquaintances in the research and in addition I started to snowball informants. What was the point of being an opportunistic insider if I was not going to take advantage of it? Besides my own closely knitted group of postgraduate students, I began to meet their friends: architects, chefs, artists, researchers, business owners. The research was not only relying on unstructured interviews but it involved participant observation in a very substantial way.

I kept in touch with many of my informants throughout the course of the research, either by re-interviewing them, contacting them on Facebook or by keeping contact through e-mails. Between 2008 and 2011, I recorded the oral history of 34 Mexicans who were born between 1966 and 1984, the youngest was 24 and the oldest 45. They had arrived in Spain between 1995 and 2007 and their time of stay varied between 5 months and 16 years. 17 of them were women and 17 men. All of them had at least a bachelor's degree or its equivalent, and the majority undertook or was undertaking a postgraduate degree².

I witnessed how some of them transited from being students to working professionals. How some of them changed their migratory statuses, got married or divorced, started to have offspring. I also lost contact of many of them because they moved elsewhere. And in the last

² See Annex I for a more detailed description of the informants.

few months I helped some of them to pack their bags because they were leaving the city. Because of this, it was difficult to put a label on them and freeze their changing experiences in time. But next to their pseudonym I added the following information: their migration channel³, current occupation, and time of stay at the moment of the interview.

It was by witnessing at a very close range the changing experiences of the people that was close to me in a personal and informal setting that I was able to make sense of the home-making experiences. Most of those conversations were not recorded, but helped me to look for new informants to widen the pool. It was through witnessing and experiencing the hope, heartbreak and rebound that life in Madrid conveyed that I was able to account for the everyday life of Mexicans in the city.

I also interviewed people that were working for the Mexican government and a person who was working as a liaison between Spanish and Mexican Universities. In Madrid, I interviewed the Consul, the Director of Pro-Mexico (an organization for commercial exchange) and the Director of Tech BA (a government sponsored business accelerator). They were interviewed as government officials and provided insight for the context of the study. The liaison between Spanish and Mexican Universities, who was the daughter of a couple of Spanish refugees, provided insight for the historical overview. Three close friends who are Consuls in different cities in the U.S, provided insiders knowledge on the relationship between Mexico and its extraterritorial citizens.

1.4 MADRID, MY HOME?

My move to Madrid facilitated the research and at the same time posted new problems. Geographical distance was no longer an issue and I would finally be able to immerse into the field instead of engaging on maratonic sessions of unstructured interviews and participant observation. Instead, I was confronted to the fact that in my new situation everything could be considered part of the research: immigration procedures, everyday life exchanges, gatherings

³ See chapter 6. Migration channels. It's a typology comprised by the motive behind their relocation and their migratory status: Students (S), workers (W), dual nationals (DN), partners (P) and adventurers (A). Additional information on this can be located in Annex I.

with friends, my partners' habits, my new habits. Of course, in a sense I was placed in a privileged position as a researcher because I had access to valuable pieces of information even without trying but at the same time and in the most literal sense I had gone fully native: I was re-living some of the issues my informants told me about. Up to this point I am not sure to what extent what they told me influenced my experience in Madrid, or if I was going through those things because the analytical categories I built were guiding my own experience, or if it was because I was indeed giving an accurate portrayal of some of the everyday aspects of life in Madrid. I guess it is a combination of those three things.

When I was doing the research while living elsewhere, my own ignorance of the specific dynamics of the city came in handy and at the same time my partial membership to the group facilitated the access. I was observing certain interactions, carefully registering them and sometimes, I engaged in them. Then, I would get out of the "field" and go back "home(?)" to reflect on the things I observed and evaluate how I participated in some of them. By moving to Madrid my position as an insider became even more salient and for a time, participation became the rule, while observation became almost impossible.

In some aspects, the familiarity I perceived in Madrid while I was "visiting" inspired the research. When I started asking my informants about their relationship and perception of the city, most of them indicated that on the surface there were many things that reminded them of Mexico, but that there were some other things that were completely different. They talked about the differences in the seasonal change, the more equal social relations and the language. *The language?* Some of them even stated that feeling at home in Madrid could be even harder than feeling at home in a completely alien place, because this perceived familiarity could lead to a series of misunderstandings that left them with a clear feeling of not belonging to the place. I asked for examples of this and I registered them, but somehow I was unable to understand how or why these misunderstandings would have such a strong reaction. Of course, when I moved into the city I started to experience this mild feeling of alienation that my informants so frequently described.

Personal e-mail to M vd Z and CI, friends and fellow social scientists in Amsterdam.

02/04/09

Remember back in the day, when we were young and innocent, I used to tell you about all the complaining that went on about "the Spanish manners" in my interviews?

So, the first few weeks of my brand new life in Madrid I was kind of scared of going out and do my thing, because of all the horror stories my guys told me about. One day last week I told myself "Are we women or mice?" (we're mice we're mice!). Xxxx was already giving me a hard time because he noticed he was the one doing the transactions on a daily basis while the mouse was safely behind him waiting for things to get done. So I stepped out of my house, now as a resident of the city, not as a nosy researcher-tourist and I went to the "estanquillo" to buy some gum and newspapers.

So I go, and instead of asking for some "chicle" I tell the guy I want "goma de mascar" and a newspaper. *Alles god*. Then he tells me I have to pay 2.20 and I give him a 5 euro note and offer the 20 "centavos" (cents) and he looks at me like I am offering something really disgusting and asks *"You want to give me the twenty WHAT?"* shyly I reply *"The twenty centavos"*. He goes again *"The twenty WHAT?"* So, thinking he was a little deaf I raise my voice and while showing him the coin I say *"CENTAVOS"*. Oh boy. He looks at me and slowly says *"Oh. They are called CEN-TI-MOS (cents)"*. It is called synonym A_____E! I said to myself.

You know what? Now I get all the complaining in my interviews. When I used to come back and forth to Madrid I was just grateful to be in a city where I understood everything that was being said to me, and hell did I appreciated having some sunlight and no rain.

Anyway, the thing is this is not a particular and extraordinary situation. It happens almost everyday. Did you ask for "rebanada" instead of "porción" of cake? Laughs ensue. Do you want a "boleto" for the metro? Bad luck they only sell "billetes". Sometimes I feel like I am speaking a completely different language. I mean come on! it's not like I am spurring some slang here...cut me some slack Madrid or I will stop liking you.

Luvs, M

Suddenly, I could experience in my own skin everything I had been told about: Madrileans were rude, the immigration procedures were disorganized, the seasonal change was extreme and more importantly, the shop in the corner of my new home sold green salsa. I found out a few things by myself and without the need of some informant guiding my OWN experience in the city: the weather was uncomfortably dry, I had to learn to power-walk to avoid being bumped on the street by someone in a rush and any vaguely Asian-looking person in a small grocery store would be asked for the prices and location of the products, even though they were Mexican clients and not Asian owners or counter ladies. *Talk about stereotypes.*

After a while and a few bottles of moisturizer later, I became familiar with the prices and location of the products in my corner shop. Madrid was no longer my playground but somehow, it became my home. It all happened while I was busy meeting people, asking questions, making notes and transcribing interviews. All of the sudden, I could not remember why these Mexicans were *oh so interesting!* They/we became boring and there was not much to say about them/us. Why was I even talking about Mexicans when their experiences were neither that particular nor that interesting? What could I say about them? After all I knew them, *I was an insider* and I was handing in draft after draft describing their lives, but you could place any nationality instead of Mexican and no one would tell the difference. My own position within the field, obscured my ability to find any particularity in the things I was observing. I was ill equipped to "interpret culture".

My Lonely Reader (*Hi Liliana!*) would ask for some clarifications about a concept "a Mexicanism" and I would look for synonyms to make myself clear. The meanings behind these seemingly inconspicuous words, which were so engrained in the way we talked and described our everyday life experiences, revealed a particular view of the world that was marked by our shared history and intersections. Finding ill fitting synonyms and approximations was not enough to undercover the nuances and specificities that such terms conveyed. There was a need to look into broader historical, social, political and economic processes to explain what was being said and more importantly, why it was being said. Then,

what started as a project of translation not only for my Lonely Reader but also for my potentially international readership (*I know, I was ambitious*) became a project of anthropological interpretation: I was not a "native", I was an anthropologist.

Of course up to this date I am a little bit wary of Mexicans reading my work because in Norma Alarcón's (1989) words: *la traddutora becomes la traditora*. This will be developed throughout the work, but coming from a country with such a strong place-based identity, which is being constantly re-inforced through many channels and at different levels, can take a toll on even the most detached researchers.

That is another aspect of holding an insiders position in the field. Sometimes, one gets the feeling of having betrayed those who so willingly contributed with their time and experiences to fuel a research. In a more abstract sense, uncovering some of the dirty little secrets of the places that are also your home is an intense experience that requires a great deal of painful auto-reflexivity and self constraint. After all, the (hi)stories you are telling, are also about yourself and the places you are talking about are also your home(s).

So, in the following pages you will find the stories of people talking about, remembering of and making homes, here and there. These stories are embedded in broader processes of identity (trans) formation in various historical periods, marked by diverging vectors of power and interests, that are shaping events not only in Mexico and Spain, but worldwide.

2. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY: The other face of Mexican migration

According to the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de Mexicanos en el Exterior, IME), there are approximately 11,649,991 Mexicans living outside the country and the overwhelming majority of them live in the United States (IME, 2012).

This numbers alone, make Mexican emigration the most significant amongst the State members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCDE, 2006). Migration from countries belonging to this select organization of developed nations tends to be highly skilled, with the exception of Mexico and Portugal. Thus, it is not surprising that the majority of the policies and academic studies on Mexican migration are focused on the largely unskilled migration into the U.S (OCDE, 2006).

However, there is also a highly skilled component of Mexican migration that caught the academic and public policy gaze since the mid 1990's, when scholars and policy makers noticed an increase in the educative level of Mexican migration into the U.S. They were concerned with the impact that the emigration of the highly skilled can have on the development of the country. Are Mexican "brains" draining, wasting or circulating? (González Becerril, 2005; Bolay and Tejada, 2005; Cataños-Lomnitz, 2003; Izquierdo, 2008; Marcelli and Cornelius, 2001; Pellegrino, 2004).

While González Becerril (2005) reports that in the 1980's only four percent of the Mexican-born residents (documented and undocumented) had tertiary education, Bolay and Tejada (2005) point out that by the 1990's there were twelve percent and in 2000's fourteen percent. This migration was framed in terms of brain-drain. The authors note that in 2000, between sixteen and nineteen percent of all the Mexicans with tertiary education were living in the U.S. (Tejada and Bolay, 2005:17).

There are also estimations on the volume of Mexican migrants in to the EU, whose profile diverges from the ones to the U.S. According to Mexican diplomatic representations, seventy percent of the Mexicans in Europe have tertiary education. Around forty six percent of them

migrated to study and forty percent moved because of their families, mainly their European spouses. Although the numbers of Mexican migration into Europe are small, they point out that the largest communities are located in Spain, Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom and France (in order of importance) (Tejada and Bolay, 2005).

In this section, a general overview of Mexican migration into Spain will be provided. It will start by a review of the historical, economic and social context in which this migration takes place, and will be followed by a review their demographic profile.

2.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Since Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, the relationship between both countries has gone through various stages. Few years after Mexico gained its independence, a failed attempt to re-conquer Mexico derived in the expulsion of the remaining Spanish residents and left hundreds of families torn apart (León Portilla, 2006). In the following years, throughout the XIX century, there was a small but steady influx economically led migration to America, a phenomena that was known as "hacer las Américas" (Herrero 2004; Lida, 1993). Such influx was cut short by the start of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 and then came the Spanish Civil war.

During the Spanish Civil war (1936-1939) Mexico received thousands of Spanish exiles that were fleeing from francoist repression. Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas openly supported the causes of the Spanish Republican Army and received Spanish from all walks of life. He declared that Mexico would receive refugees *"without distinctions of age and gender, political or religious affiliation, to all the Spanish that are nowadays seeking for refugee in France, its colonies or protectorates, and with simply asking freely for the shelter offered by a friend"* (Lida, 1993: 433). The political character of such migration, that involved scientists, researchers, teachers and artists, derived in a rich economical, cultural and intellectual production that even nowadays impacts Mexican landscape.

Mexico and Spain severed diplomatic relations during Franco's dictatorship, which spanned for over thirty years. It became clear, however, that the relationship between both countries did not depend on the state of their diplomatic relations. The small but constant human exchange between both countries throughout the 19th and part of the 20th centuries, created a transnational social field: there were families linked on both sides of the Atlantic ocean, and a myriad of economic and cultural endeavors were not only sustained but developed.

Throughout the 20th Century Mexican-based companies such as Bimbo or Vips developed under the direction of Spanish economic immigrants who went to Mexico to "hacer las Américas", thousands of Mexican students attended schools like "El Colegio Madrid" or the "Instituto Luis Vives" that were founded by Spanish refugees and many generations of Mexican social scientists were trained in el "Colegio de México" formerly known as "Casa de España", just to give some examples.

2.1.1 The new relation: Between the EU and the NAFTA

The death of Franco in 1975 marked the beginning Spain's transition towards a democratic system that was paired with an unprecedented economic growth stimulated by emigrant remittances, a vibrant tourist industry and the industrialization of the Northern part of the country. By 1986, this set of economic and political transformations enabled the full integration of Spain into, what would be known later as the European Union: the European Economic Community (EEC) (Colectivo IOÉ, 2001; Suárez-Navaz, 2004).

In the mean time, Mexico was going through a process of transformation as well. A series of economic crisis throughout the 1970's and early 1980's, made clear that the prevailing economic model based on import-substitution and state-led industrialization was failing. By signing the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1984 and later on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994, Mexican economy rapidly shifted from a highly protectionist model to a neoliberal set up.

Of course the nature and the scope of both supra-national projects, the NAFTA and the EU, had a differentiated impact in the development of Mexico and Spain respectively. While the NAFTA is a predominantly a trade agreement, the EU entails a greater project of economic, social and political integration. In this sense, Spain benefited of a series of compensatory measures destined to homogenize its macro-economic conditions with the rest of the EU members, while Mexico entered a trade agreement under a profound asymmetry that apparently it has not only prevailed throughout the years, but perhaps it has increased (Aguilar and Bueno, 2003; Fiess and Fugazza, 2002).

It is this integration into supra-national projects that marks a new kind of relationship between both countries. Within the logics of a globalized economy and because of their particular geopolitical situation, both countries represent a bridge between two of the largest economic areas in the world. For Spain, Mexico was the trampoline to the U.S and for Mexico, Spain represented the gate to the EU markets.

a. From Spain to Mexico

In 1997 Mexico and the EU signed a free trade agreement (FTA) that entered in to force in 2000. Such agreement was the first transatlantic FTA signed by the EU and for Mexico it represented an opportunity to gain some independence from the US economy, by diversifying its foreign trade and attract investment that would translate in the creation of employment in the country.

In the period between 2000 and 2006, Mexico's trade deficit with the EU rose from US\$9.4 billion to US\$16.9billion. This is to say, Mexico is importing more products from the UE than the ones it is exporting. Sixty percent of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Mexico was still coming from the US, while twenty percent came from the EU. That twenty percent of FDI was coming from the EU, 37.4 from Spain, 35.6 from the Netherlands, 10.2 from the United Kingdom and 6.8 from Germany (Aguirre Revelez and Perez Rocha, 2007).

Representing the majority of the EU's investment in Mexico, a handful of Spanish companies have benefitted from this setup: Telefónica in the telecommunications sector, two banks Santander Central Hispano and Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentaria, the petrochemical Iberdrola-YSF and electricity companies such as Endesa and Unión Fenosa (Aguirre Revelez and Perez Rocha, 2007).

As a by-product of the expansion of Spanish firms in Mexico, there has been a sizeable relocation of their technical and managerial staff, from the center to the periphery. This is to say, while Spanish immigration into Mexico during the 19th Century was economic, and the one in the first half of the 20th Century was politically-led, the "new" wave of Spanish immigration is characterized by high levels of skill and temporality.

Analyzing the human face of the exchanges between Mexico and Spain, Mendoza and Ortiz-Guitart (2007, 2008, 2008a) have focused on the daily lives and work experiences of Spanish professionals living in Mexico. They partly, analyze such migration from the perspective of the center-periphery model, where the Spanish companies expand their activities to developing countries and chose to relocate part of their team, in this specific case, to Mexico. But they also point out that there are sizable numbers of people moving outside a corporate structure and that the motives behind their relocation vary. They conclude that in general, living and working in Mexico can derive in an upward mobility, due to the possibilities to have job-stability and a higher income.

b. From Mexico to Spain

Mexico is the sixth investor in Spain in terms of stock, and the first Latin American investor in the country (investinspain, 18.05.2011). Moreover, according to the city council of Madrid, Mexico is the second non-European investor in the city, just behind the United States (Municipio de Madrid, 2008).

Mexican transnational companies such as Cemex, Grupo Modelo or the state held oil company Pemex, have located their European headquarters in the Madrid. These companies represent biggest Mexican investments in Spain.

Smaller Mexican-based companies are trying to expand their businesses through Europe using Spain and more concretely Madrid as the basis for their operations. One example of the importance of Spain as a business gate to Europe for small and mid size companies is the establishment of Tech Ba offices in Madrid in 2008. Tech Ba, is a state sponsored business accelerator dedicated to aid Mexican technological enterprises, that was created jointly by the "Mexico-US Foundation for Science" and the Mexican government. Initially, it opened branches in traditional technological hubs in North America (Silicon Valley, Seattle and Vancouver) and the most recent office in Madrid, is their only non-North American location. There are also a myriad of businesses owned by Mexican migrants. The most well known example of businesses at a smaller scale are the countless Mexican restaurants located in the central neighborhoods of Madrid, which are the subject of the research by Rodriguez Lozano (2010). There are also middling business ran by Mexican professionals trying to profit from the links that bind both countries: import-export businesses, architectural firms, law firms, professional consultants.

Data on the human face of the Mexican presence in Spain has been relatively absent from scholarly studies. This lack of data is attributable to the fact that most of the human and economic exchanges coming from Mexico have been focused on the U.S. However, in the last decade, there has been some interest on the Mexican community in Spain, notably, the work by Perez Herrero (1999) and Rodriguez Lozano (2010) on Mexican entrepreneurs in Spain. There are several reasons behind these studies. First they point out that there is an increasing economic interest between both countries. Second, due to their high levels of education, the socio-demographic characteristics of Mexican migration to Spain makes them an interesting group to study. Third, there is a relatively small but highly visible Mexican community in Madrid.

Mexican migration into Spain tends to have high levels of education and, according to Rodriguez Lozano, they present a certain level of entrepreneurship that has derived in the proliferation of small and mid sized businesses owned by Mexican immigrants in Spain, but particularly in Madrid (Rodriguez Lozano, 2010: 126).

2.2 MEXICANS IN SPAIN: IN NUMBERS

According to Mexican Consular Authorities in Madrid, Mexicans in Spain are often *"postgraduate students, young professionals and spouses of Spanish or European citizens"*.

Although, neither the Consulate nor the Embassy has exact information, they state that bulk of the consular work is focused on issuing documents to a predominantly middle class Mexican population and handling cases of petty robberies to tourists. Occasionally, they handle cases involving the detention and deportation of undocumented nationals and a few more involving Mexican citizens facing criminal charges in Spain, particularly those related to drug trafficking.

Mexican consular authorities all over the world have a consular registration to keep track of the Mexican nationals living abroad. However, since such registry and un-registry is not mandatory, it tends to be unreliable. In turn, more reliable sources of information are the records of incoming population that each country makes.

In the case of Spain, the sources to assess the size and general demographic characteristics of the Mexicans in Spain are the Municipal Register (Padrón Municipal de Habitantes, PMH), the Statistical Yearbook of Immigration (Anuario Estadístico de Inmigración, AEI) and the National Population Census of 2001 (Censo Nacional de Población, CNP). Of course, one has to keep in mind that the three sources present considerable biases and that because of their scope and goals they often present non-comparable data. The PMH has yearly updates that include foreign residents independently of their legal status in the country, but disaggregated data is limited to the most represented nationalities, which is not the case of Mexican nationals. The AEI includes disaggregated data on a wider spectrum of nationalities, including Mexicans, but it is limited to documented immigration. And finally the CNP has the advantage of providing disaggregate data on the education levels and occupation of the population, also independently of their legal status in the country, but the information can be dated, since it was last published in 2001.

With this in mind, this part of the work will provide a quantitative glance into the Mexican

population living in Spain. The PMH edition of 2009, informs the general data such as the evolution of Mexican nationals residing in the country overtime, the preferred provinces of residence and their age distribution. Data on the types of authorizations to reside in the country and the distribution by sex are taken from the AEI of 2009. Other socio-economic indicators such as level of education and occupation are taken from the CP of 2001 and older versions of the AEI.

2.2.1 Demographic Profile

In any case, up to this date, when one looks at general charts of immigration into Spain one has to guess Mexicans are contemplated in the category of "other nationalities". This because although immigration from Mexico has been steadily growing in the last ten years, from less than five thousand in 1999, to a little over eighteen thousand in 2004 and finally twenty five thousand in 2009, in the face of an immigrant population that is around five million people, Mexicans are still statistically invisible in Spain (figure 1).

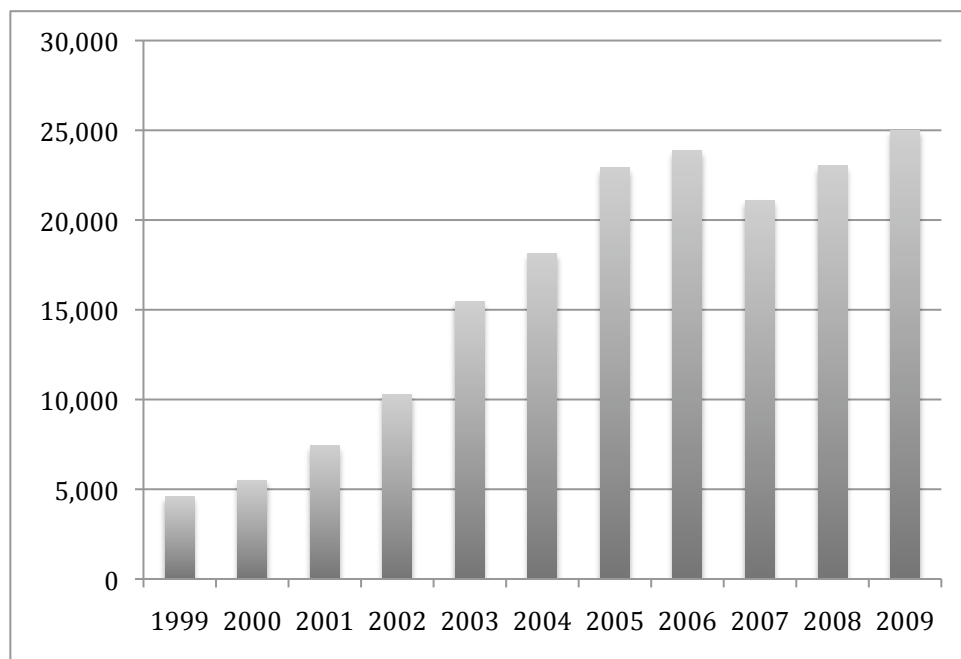


Figure 1. Mexicans in Spain overtime (PMH 1999-2009)

While around forty percent of these Mexicans are scattered around the country, the remaining

are mainly concentrated in Madrid and Barcelona (figure 2). Because of the biases mentioned above, the numbers on immigrant population in Madrid can range from around eight hundred thousand (AEI, 2009) to over one million people (PMH, 2009). Still, independently of the source of information, the Mexicans that reportedly live in Madrid still account for less than one percent of the foreigners living in the city.

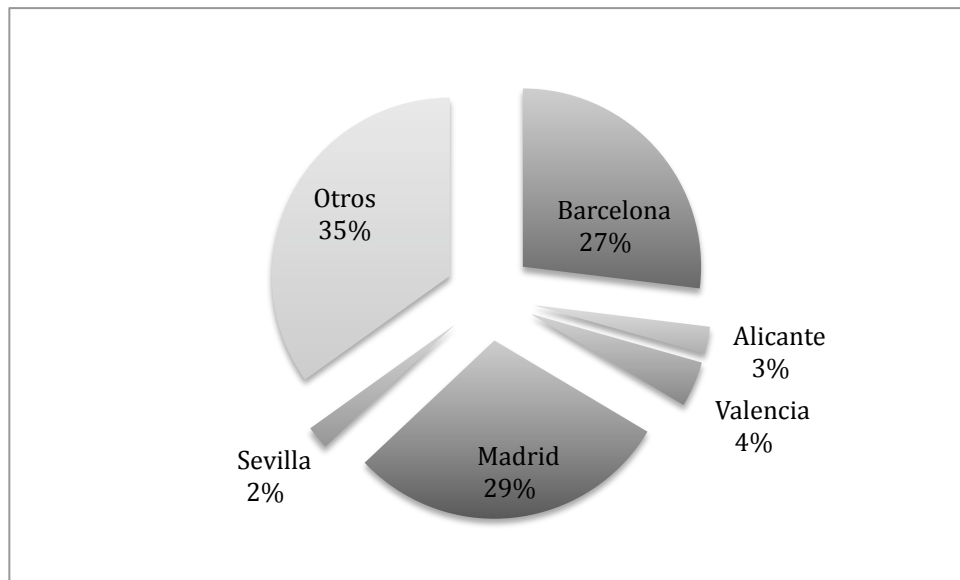


Figure 2. Provinces of residence as percentages in 2009 (PMH, 2009)

According to the PMH almost ninety percent of the Mexican population in Spain are in a working age bracket (16 to 64). The majority, around eighty percent, are between 20 and 49 years old (figure 3).

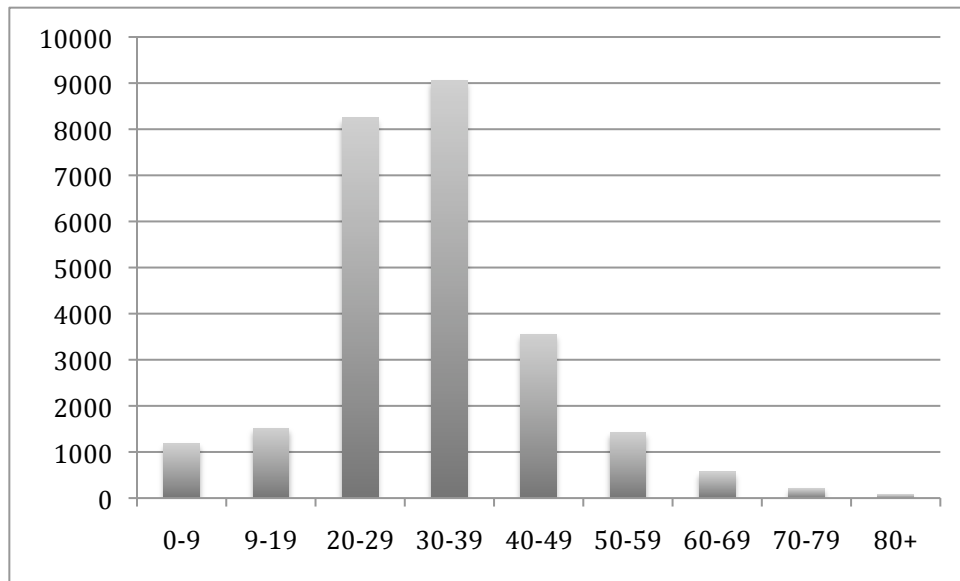


Figure 3. Age distributions of Mexicans in 2009 (PMH, 2009)

When looking at the data on documented immigration provided by the AEI, in 2009, slightly over twenty thousand Mexicans had authorization to reside in Spain (figure 4).

Broadly, there are three types of authorization to enter Spain as a non-tourist. (1) Under the communitarian regime, which implies that there is a direct familial connection to a Spanish or EU-citizen, in which case, the holder of the permit has access to the same rights a EU -citizen has. (2) Under the general regime, which is an umbrella category that gathers different situations, from temporal working permits, non-lucrative stays and family re-unification processes. (3) And finally with a Student visa, which implies that the holder of the permit can live and work part-time in the country, while enrolled in a study program that can range from primary to tertiary education.

Of the twenty thousand Mexicans that are authorized to live in the country, fifty seven percent are women and forty three percent are men. The majority of the women, forty four percent, are under the communitarian regime, thirty five percent are under the general regime and twenty one percent hold a student visa. In contrast, the majority of men, forty three percent, fall under the general regime, twenty nine percent under the communitarian regime and twenty eight percent have a student visa (Figure 4).

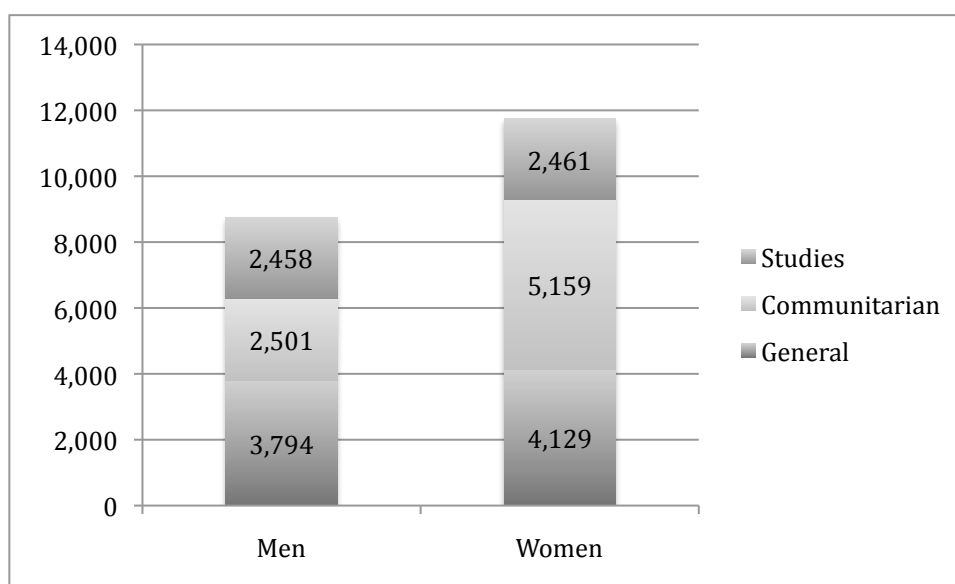


Figure 4. Types of Authorizations to Mexicans in 2009 (AEI, 2009)

2.2.2 Socioeconomic profile

When does Mexican migration become statistically visible? When analyzing and contrasting the disaggregated data, on the level of education and the occupation. The CP (2001) and the AEI (2006) contain information on the occupation and on graduate and postgraduate enrolment of foreigners in the school years of 2002-2003 and 2003-2004⁴.

In 2001, almost seventy percent of Mexicans were either studying or performing paid work, followed by fifteen percent who did unpaid household chores. Nine percent were unemployed, two percent were retired and the remaining six percent were either minors who did not attend school or people living out of their rents (figure 5).

⁴ Just as a reminder, the CP is a national census and therefore contemplates documented and undocumented immigration alike, while the AEI reports only contemplate documented immigration into the country.

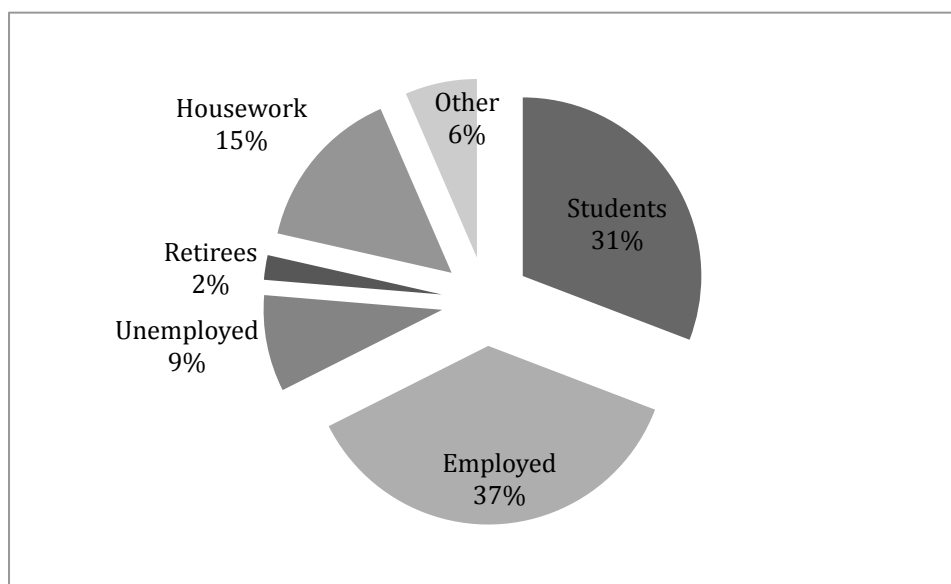


Figure 5. Activity of Mexicans in 2001 (CP 2001)

According to the CP of 2001, the majority of Mexicans living in Spain had tertiary education. This implies that four out of every ten Mexicans in the country had studies at a graduate or postgraduate level, making them highly skilled migrants (figure 6).

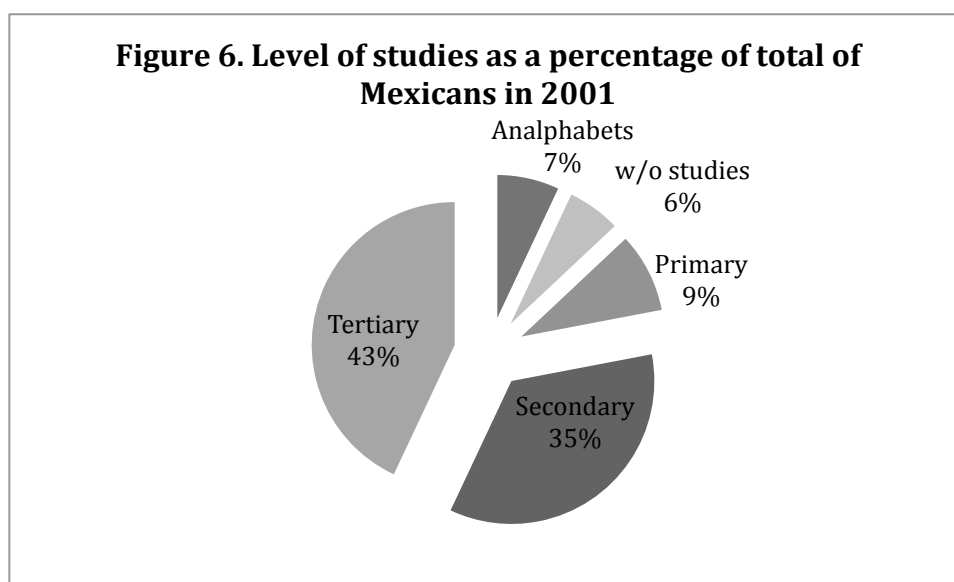


Figure 6. Level of studies of Mexicans in 2001 (CP, 2001)

It is interesting to note that the majority of immigrants in Spain overall tend to have, secondary studies, this is to say, they hold a high school diploma or its equivalent. Of course this changes when analyzing data dissaggregated data by continent of origin.

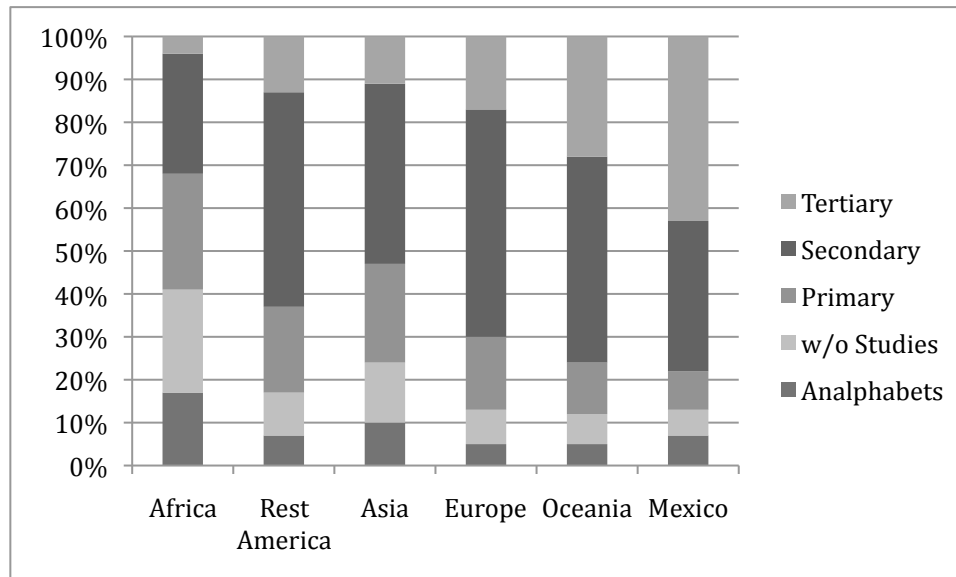


Figure 7. Distribution of education levels in selected country/regions 2001 (CP, 2001)

Although in 2001, Mexicans accounted for .5 percent of the immigrant population in the country, when comparing level of studies one gets to see that that Mexicans represented almost two percent of the immigrant population with tertiary education.

This highly skilled component of Mexican migration into Spain becomes even more evident when analyzing data on student enrolment in higher education degrees (school year 2004-2005). According to the data compiled on 2006 by the AEI, the majority of the foreigners enrolled in postgraduate degrees came from Latin America (sixty six percent), followed by European nationals (twenty four percent), which is not surprising given the former's cultural proximity and the latter's geographical one (Figure 8).

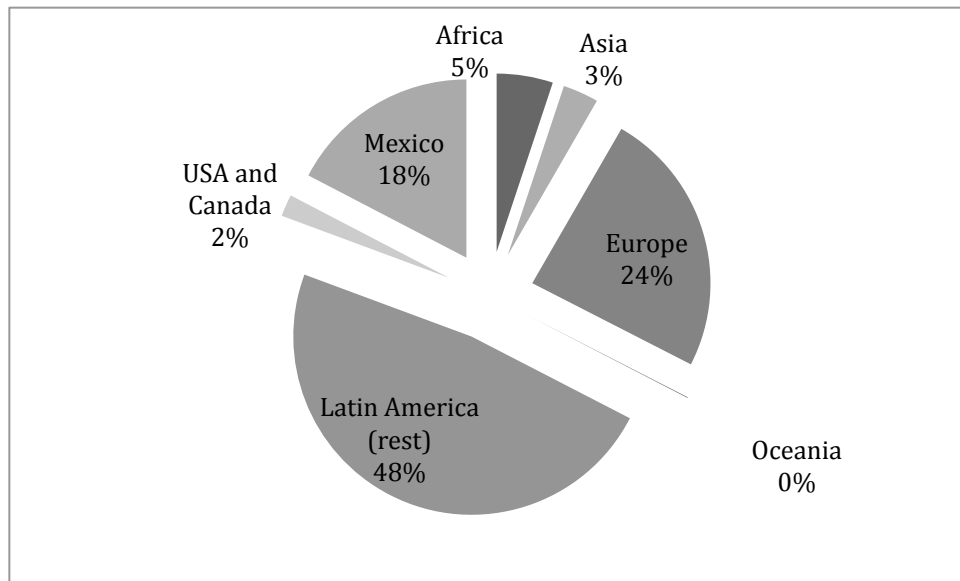


Figure 8. Enrolment in postgraduate degrees in selected country/regions in 2004-05 (AEI, 2006)

What is surprising is that Mexicans, who tend to score less than one percent in almost every comparison that can be made against other nationalities, represent eighteen percent of the foreigners enrolled in a postgraduate degree.

2.3 SKILLED, SMALL AND WELCOMED

Although the Mexican community in Spain is rather small, it is highly regarded by the locals. According to a survey conducted by "El Real Instituto El Cano", Mexicans are the second most trusted and liked Latin Americans in Spain (Noya 2004).

This rather homogeneous group of migrants holds a privileged position within their host society. They have the economic and educational means to make a living in Spain and in general, they are welcomed in their host country. Moreover, for over 500 years both the sending and the receiving countries had an intense cultural, economical and human exchange. This exchange begun during the colonial era, and has remained throughout the years and heightened during specific periods. The most notorious of the contemporary era occurred during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) when Mexico received between 20.000 and 40.000 Spanish exiles. Although the number of Spanish that resettled in Mexico is unclear, the

schools, universities and enterprises founded by these migrants remain well anchored in the cultural and economic landscape of Mexico. More recently and due to an increasing presence of Spanish investments in Mexico, over 77.000 Spanish live in the country (INEGI: 2007, Mendoza and Ortiz: 2008).

In addition, Spanish law provides naturalization of legal residents (non-students) after ten years of residence, and the amount of time is diminished to two years of residence in the case of citizens of former Spanish colonies, with the exception of the protectorate of Morocco (Huntoon, 1998: 429).

Although they tend to be clustered with the broader category of "Latin American immigrants", they also feel there are intra-group differences, mainly when contrasted with the less favorable local attitude and perception towards more voluminous national groups of immigrants such as those from Ecuador, Peru or Colombia (Noya, 2004).

Did you ever had problems with the migra?

No, they stopped me two or three times to ask for papers and I always told them "no, well, I don't have any, I'm Mexican, I come from la Nueva España!"... and beware being, Mexican (opens) doors. The word Mexico is Magical Mexico, not to speak about racism, but being honest it is not the same in Spain to be from Morocco or from Ecuador, that being from Mexico. There is a difference, I mean it is not that I'm a racist but I have seen it and I have lived it, I still live it (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 10 years)

This perception of enjoying a more privileged position than the rest of their Latin American counterparts is articulated around notions of "visibility" and social class but also around notions of historical debt and stronger solidarity links between Mexico and Spain, due to the shared colonial past, but most of all due to the humanitarian aid provided to refugees from the Spanish Civil war.

3. HOME

In an era of increasing mobility, the traditional notions of home as exclusively bounded to a fixed space and the belief that feelings of home are only attained through fixity and stability, are being constantly challenged and there is a notable interest in the ways in which individuals construct homes and experience feelings of home in different places.

Accordingly, there is a growing body of literature concerned with the meaning of home for different mobile populations that range from refugees to tourists. This literature reveals that a great part of their migratory experience is articulated around their notion of home: what is home and what it is not, what engenders feelings of home and what feelings of alienation or estrangement. While some of them might experience a great sense of loss and homelessness, some others can feel more at home in a new place than in a place whose meaning was accrued through a long history and, for some more the movement derives in a multiplicity of homes. The "universally affective power of home" is such, that in the light of an increasingly mobile world this very concept articulates a great part of the contemporary debate around place, identity and belonging. In the following chapter an overview of such debate will be provided. It will start by problematization of the concept of home that allows us to understand it beyond these notions of fixity and stability. Then, it will sketch a definition of place as a social construct that allows us to understand how and why the concept of home has been subject of much debate at all levels. It will be followed by a sketch on the ways in which contending definitions of place determine the way in which attachments to place are understood, and this will be grounded through the discussion of a particular way of experiencing these attachments to place: the feelings of home.

As a whole, this chapter sets up the tone for the rest of the work which, in Ferguson and Gupta's (1997) words is challenging "*the picture of the world, one made up of discrete, originally separate cultures*" (35) and instead is thinking about it, as Massey (2001) states, as

tapestry where a multiplicity of social relations are stretching throughout the globe, and are working as linking threads that not only connect but construct a multiplicity of places whose particularity lays in the fact that nowhere else that particular combination of "threads" exist.

3.1 HOME IN THE JOURNEYS OF MIGRATION

Home has been identified by many scholars as one of the most important "spatial markers" of identity and it is generally conceived as a place providing individuals with a sense of attachment and belonging, which can be understood as feelings of home (Proshansky, 1983). Traditionally, home has been defined as the "*fixed center of one's life*" (Rapport and Dawson 1998:6), implying that it is necessarily located in a particular geographical space. Home can be conceived as a country, a neighborhood or a building. In its traditional sense, always implies notions of fixity and stability, which in turn produce feelings of attachment and belonging this is to say, feelings of home.

Although it has been long established that feelings of home are experienced in familiar places filled with meaning accrued from a long time of residence, there is little insight on the ways in which mobile individuals experience feelings of home and moreover, which are the sources of such feelings.

A number of scholars agree that home has a dual meaning: it is a concrete physical space but also refers to spaces of personal belonging at different geographical scales that can range from a room to a nation or even the world (Graham and Khosravi 1997: 130; Morley 2001:425, Olwig 1999: 83).

In its conventional usage home has a dual meaning: first, it can refer to a site where the everyday life is lived, often surrounded by close family, and second it can mean a place associated with a notion of belonging, of feeling at home. These two meanings are ideally expected to coincide so that one feels at home in the physical site where one lives. (Olwig 1999: 83)

In resonance with this dual meaning of home, Sarah Ahmed (1999) states that: *"the journeys of migration involve a splitting of home as a place of origin and home as the sensory world of everyday experience"*(341). Furthermore, Avtar Brah (2011) offers a useful theorization of home as the lived experience is *"the place where the everyday and the unexpected of daily practice produce a feeling of home...it makes reference to a social and physical geography...an imagined community mainly through everyday interactions"* (own translation Brah, 2011:26). It has to be pointed out that this imagined community might refer to the nation, but it also might refer to other groups of people whose values and interests we share. The lesson derived from these works is that to study the concept of home and the ways in which mobile individuals experience feelings of home one has to think about place, but not necessarily a particular or single one. What do we mean by place, and why does this concept is triggering so many discussions?

3.2 PLACE

Geographers, sociologists and psychologists, among others, conceive places as consisting of a physical environment but also charged with meaning attached through human interpretation, perceptions, feelings and actions. A place is more than a physical setting and its importance lies on the relationships to people, the practices and emotions that it fosters. Thus, place is *"a spatial entity that is perceived and experienced as meaningful by one person alone or by a group of people"* (Gustafson, 2001: 668).

The importance of place and its meaning to human experience lays on the fact that it can engender a sense of belonging for individuals as well as groups thus, place constitutes a spatial anchor for the diverse identities individuals and groups can develop throughout their lifetime (Gustafson, 2001; Proshansky et al 1983; Cuba and Hummon, 1993).

Of course in the context of an increasingly interconnected world, the idea of a place anchoring certain identities is being constantly unsettled, and therefore, the meaning of certain places is the arena of discussion around identity and belonging.

3.2.1 The social construction of place

It is evident that globalization has indeed impacted the meaning of places, before engaging in that discussion I want to highlight two things. 1) That the character of places is and has been constantly changing. 2) That any discussions around place, identity and belonging are intrinsically related to questions of power. This should go without saying, but it becomes necessary in the light of increasing essentialist and exclusionist discourses around home and place. Such discourses, seem to be reacting not only against globalization (which should be questioned), but in particularly rabid and unreflective ways against almost all international forms of human mobility: forced or voluntary, exploitative or enriching, temporal or permanent, de-humanizing or empowering.

While, globalization has changed the meaning of place and home, and the way in which we relate to them, such changes are a constant in human history. A much older example of the character of a place changing abruptly, happened during the colonial "encounters" centuries ago and in this process the identities of both, colonizers and colonized became reconfigured (see for example, the work of Stuart Hall, Avatr Brah, Rodolfo Stavehagen or Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, just to mention some of them). It could be further argued, that this newly found interest in examining the ways in which globalization in changing places, could also be partly seen as a product of post-coloniality. Nowadays it is not only the experience of place in the periphery that has been greatly unsettled but the center is experiencing this encounter with the Other in its own turf and at an unprecedented rate. As Rodolfo Stavehagen points out, there is an unavoidable truth behind the ironic conceptualization of Los Angeles as one of the biggest third world cities on the planet (1994: 11).

In this sense, a meaningful discussion around the place and its role in the formation of individual and collective identities, has to depart from two understandings. Place and identity are social constructs and their meaning is the product of a constant differentiation with others.

But as David Harvey (1990) point out, even when definitions of time and space and thus, those of place, are social constructs they operate *"with the full force of objective facts to which all individuals and institutions necessarily respond"* (418). Such definitions operate *"with the full force of objective facts"* because they are deeply implicated in social reproduction as they provide the basis to organize hierarchical relations, in terms of gender roles and divisions of labor. Think back on the example given about the colonial encounters, they reorganized the world according to new definitions on space (center and periphery), time (modern and ancient), place (the metropolis and the colony) and identity (the conquerors and the conquered).

Following this logic, identity, is not the stable essence of the being but is rather a process of becoming. A given identity finds its meaning only through differentiation principles that entail a constant (re) drawing symbolic borders: who are we, and who is the other. Identity as a process of becoming only can work as a point of collective identification because they can exclude others. In this sense, identity is not about essence but about strategy and position. In the words of Stuart Hall *"identities cannot be read as the elements that fix the differentiation game in a point of origin and stability, but as what is constructed as or through difference and it is constantly being destabilized by what it excludes"* (own translation Hall, 1996:19).

Thus, place is a useful theoretical construct that provides basis to address the relationships that people have with the outside world. It is by our relationship with place that we establish the meaning of a spatial entity and that same relationship partly determines our identity: colonizer and colonized, citizen and foreigner, for example.

3.2.2 Globalizing places

To what extent this increased mobility and interconnection has changed the meaning of places? The short answer to this question is that the meaning of places is changing more rapidly than ever. The fluid character of identities (of places, people and communities) is

becoming more obvious and as a result attachment to places are also becoming the source of many discussions at a political, academic and everyday life level.

Some of the most important scholars on globalization identify a trend towards the homogenization of certain places as the result of the internationalization of capital. Broadly, they point out towards a change in our concepts of space and time and the increasing presence of "generic places" which hold little difference amongst them and whose meaning is being constantly eroded by the mobility of capital.

Marx spoke of the "annihilation of space by time" to talk about the accelerated pace in which capital exchanges were taking place, and how this had an immediate effect on place and its meaning. David Harvey (1990) talks about "time-space compression" to describe how this "accelerated" movement and communication across space makes social relations to stretch geographically, changing our conceptions of distance and proximity. Manuel Castells (2000) speaks of a network society, where new electronic forms of communication are replacing face-to-face interaction and creating "space flows" which in turn are "evaporating meaning from places".

Marc Augé (1995) talks about the emergence of generic spaces (non-places) that can be found in any point of the world, one after the other, with no difference or particularity. Such non-places engender "solitary contractuality" as opposed to collective contracts based on shared values and beliefs that a place in the strict sense would foster. These are perhaps, and it does not go without irony, the archetypical places of globalization.

Examples of such generic places plague cities around the world. Airports, shopping malls or restaurant chains, seem to be the same, no matter where you are. The procedure to check in your luggage is the same in Madrid's Barajas airport and in Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport. If you go to a shopping mall, it will very likely be located out of the city center, any city's center. It will have a food-court. The food-court will have the same line of restaurants selling hamburgers, pizzas, maybe Mexican, Chinese and Japanese food and certainly you will find a place that sells flavored coffee. The procedure to order your food or drinks will be the same, no matter the restaurant and certainly independently of the place where it is. You can follow a

line and select the products you want and the interaction with the people behind the lines will be very reduced. If you have a laptop or a smart phone, you will eventually find a Wi-Fi connection, will "hook to the net" and be immediately connected to the World Wide Web: *World Wide!*

Eventually, you will go to the place where you live. It could be that you never left it, maybe, you live in a rural area or a small town. Perhaps you don't have access to the generic places I described above. Independently, there is a particular physical setting where daily life happens, and where the routines and habits and the social interactions (no matter how banal or strong they might be) take place. That place might be a room, a building, a street or a neighborhood. The point is: although in a globally interconnected world, individuals are still living their everyday lives locally, in place. In this sense, our everyday lives are marked by "bifocality" where we are connected to the global in many ways, while remaining materially and discursively linked to (a) particular place(s) (cf. Peters, 1992, cited on Gupta and Ferguson, 1992: 11). Places as are open, interconnected and ever changing. As Doreen Massey explains:

*A place is formed out of the particular set of social relations which occur at that location (**nowhere else does this precise mix occur**)... what is specific about a place, its identity, is always formed by a the juxtaposition and co-presence there of particular sets of social interrelations... a proportion of the social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being referred to in any particular context as a place (Massey, 2001: 169; emphasis added).*

It was established in the last section that places are constantly changing, as it was shown in this section globalization accelerated the pace in which those changes occur and to a certain extent it might have changed our idea of distance and proximity.

3.3 Feelings of home

There is a long standing belief that feelings of home are experienced in places filled with meaning accrued from a long time of residence. However, there is little insight on the ways in which mobile individuals experience feelings of home and moreover, which are the sources of such feelings.

Some claim that these changes are undermining the significance of place since all these interconnections and the fast pace in which exchanges are happening seem to be diluting our attachments to place and some others claim that it is precisely because of the uncertainty these changes have brought, that the locality of places is still an important anchor of individual and collective identities. This debate is embedded in one of the most prevailing oppositions of modernity, which Kaplan (1993) underlines as *"the oscillation and tension between the liberating promise of mobility and the security of a fixed location"* (212).

A sense of belonging to a place, a feeling of home, manifests in different ways. Across the literature on home, different authors identify three interrelated components of place that can engender feelings of home: physical setting, patterns of activities (habits and routines) and social relationships. The physical setting represents the context in which the everyday life takes place. The patterns of activities represent the experience in the setting and although certain activities are not place-specific, they represent recurrent and familiar points of reference that give a structure in time. The third component is the social, which is perhaps the most recognized component of a feeling of home, since it validates the individual as part of a group, providing a sense of belonging (Wiles 2008, van der Klis and Karsten 2005, Terkneli, 1995).

As it was stated at the beginning of the chapter *"the journeys of migration involve a splitting of home as a place of origin and home as the sensory world of everyday experience"* (Ahmed, 1999: 341). This implies that as a product of mobility a single place ceases to provide a bounded sense of belonging and the question is: How do we experience feelings of home, while away from home?

There is a vast line of empirically grounded research that studies the impacts of these journeys in a focused and smaller scale. These researches, show the myriad of ways in which people experience and develop not only an attachment to place, but are able to preserve many attachments at the same time.

While some experience a great sense of loss and homelessness derived from the dislocation of their homes, others preserve, enact and establish links to place through a series of practices that include the use of the channels of communication that characterize globalization: electronic networks, airports and other accelerated means of communication. In such scenarios, people are able to preserve the links that bind them to the significant places in their lives, and at the same time they are also able to establish new links to the places where their everyday life takes place. In a sense, the way in which individuals experience feelings of home is related to the way in which home and place are defined.

3.3.1 Rooted home as a purified space of belonging

Traditionally, home has been defined as the *"fixed center of one's life"* implying that it is necessarily located in a single and particular place (Rapport and Dawson, 1998: 6).

This idea of home is intrinsically linked to a tendency to naturalize the bond between peoples and places: *"that is people are often thought of, and think of themselves as being rooted in place and as deriving their identity from that rootedness"* (Malkki, 1992:27). The notion of being *rooted* in a place conflates a long history on a given place with an unquestionable and unreflective sense of belonging to a given territory. According to Malkki (1992), the idea of a rooted belonging, leaves room for only two ways to describe movement: *transplantation* and *uprootedness*. While *transplantation* involves an orderly acclimatization in a new soil, the moving subject becomes a tabula rasa where there is a clear-cut break from the previous place of attachment, supporting the idea of assimilation, so commonly seen in some conceptions of citizenship throughout the world. *Uprootedness* implies a violent displacement from the place

of origin. This violent displacement derives in an eschewed identity, where the individual's sense of belonging does not rest in the same place where he or she lives. Here, the moving subject becomes an anomaly, a broken individual plagued with an acute longing for the "lost" home. Accordingly, home is the (single) localized source and repository of an individual's sense of self and a group's sense of community.

Lets examine briefly to what extent this idea of being rooted in a home shaping an individual's sense of self but also a collective identity through the concept of nostalgia.

The word nostalgia derives from the Greek *nostos* "return home" and *algos* "pain" and it is medical term coined in the 17th century. Throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, nostalgia was a rare disease that was diagnosed in members of the military forces, explorers and sailors who contributed to shape the world as we know it today: from colonial enterprises, to liberal revolutions and liberation wars (Rosen, 1975; Anderson, 2010). Although its symptoms were confusing, ranging from night sweats and delirium to hallucinations, its primary cause was identified as *"a strong, emotionally charged desire to return home"* this desire was both the cause and cure for such disease (British Medical Journal, 1976:857). As the medical community started to find other causal links between displacement and illness, diagnosis of nostalgia became even more rare.

However, even if nostalgia was coined as a medical term, it found its full force as the zeitgeist of the mid 19th century. In the context of an unprecedented change brought by the revolutionary projects that characterized the late 18th and 19th century, nostalgia penetrated the domestic and public sphere as *"collective longing for a bygone time rather than an individual desire to return to a particular place"* (Fritzche, 2001: 1591).

Nostalgia, as a medical diagnosis and as a zeitgeist, signals the inability to make oneself at home in a constantly changing world. This as a result of the way in which place, and in consequence home are conceptualized: enclosed and bounded, but also to a certain extent "frozen" in time.

Home is implicitly constructed as a purified space of belonging in which the subject is too comfortable to question the limits or borders of her or his experience, indeed, where the subject is so at ease that she or he does not think (Ahmed, 1999: 339).

Even when home is conceptualized as a fixed and static entity, it is movement and change that triggers the discussion around it. Which does not deny the fact that for certain people a feeling of belonging is deeply rooted in a given territory, but rather acknowledges a wider variety of discourses around mobility and home-making practices. As Malkki acknowledges *"to plot only places of birth and degrees of nativeness is to blind oneself to the multiplicity of attachments that people form to places through living in, remembering and imagining them. (1992: 38) "*

3.3.2 The multi-located character of home.

...Then, are we just homesick?

The fabric of home-places is constantly changing not only for those who move, but also for those who apparently remain rooted. Lets see some examples that help to illustrate this point. A straightforward example of the constant transformation home-places are experiencing is the documentary "Los que se quedan" (Those who remain) about Mexican migration and its impact on the sending communities. Images of young children, women and elderly people trying to keep on with their everyday lives in the absence of husbands, fathers and sons, plague the screen. According to the director and producer of the documentary *"There is a deep change in the cities, towns, communities and families of the people who stay. No one speaks about this. What happens to them? How the family changes when one of its members*

leave?" In a sense their homes do not remain the same, since the people who they love, live somewhere else across the border.

An example of the reactions in the receiving communities is provided by Jan Willem Duyvendak (2011) who analyzes the case of the Netherlands where a revival of nationalistic discourses yearning for the "lost (national) home" in the face of an increasing immigrant population, has been plaguing public discourse in recent years. Duyvendak points out that these nationalistic and profoundly nostalgic discourses can be located all over Western Europe as *"right wing populist parties, on the rise in many countries, see the presence of immigrants as a threat to social cohesion and "their" national "homes". The cultural "deviance" of immigrants is considered to be incompatible with being Dutch, Danish, British, French, German, etc"* (84). The main claim of these discourses is that by keeping an attachment to their countries of origin, where their "roots" lay, immigrants are threatening the purity of the place, which "rightfully" belongs to the "natives".

A third and final example of the impacts in a global scale are the "global care chains" which Arlie Hochschild (2008) defines as *"a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring"* (34). They resonate with the feminization of migration, which can be seen in the case of Spain. As Spanish women incorporated into the labor market they relied on immigrant women to take care of the domestic sphere of their homes. In turn, these immigrant workers rely on their family networks to take care of their own homes. These chains do not only transform the households at the center, but also have an enormous impact on those on the periphery.

This brings us back to the theorization of home provided in the previous sections. Home refers to origins and roots, but it also refers to the everyday lived experience of the local. These examples show this locality is being constantly transformed, reinvented and appropriated by those who inhabit it. Thus, the material space of home provides support to individual and collective narratives about identity and brings to light not only the multiple identities that can inhabit one space, but also can show how these identities work as linking threads, weaving in together different spaces. Following this "textile" metaphor, we may

speak of a global tapestry where certain practices and relationships are constantly overlapping and intersecting, albeit most of the time under asymmetrical vectors of power (Massey, 1995: 69).

a. Routing homes as hybridity and transformation

Several anthropologists (Clifford, 1997; Gilroy, 1993; Hall; Ahmed, 1993, among others) who are interested in this constant overlapping and intersecting, claim that instead of focusing solely on the idea of roots we should acknowledge that to the connections we make while on the move. The notion of *routes* points towards the ways in which mobility and its encounters, exchanges and mixtures reshape our identities and senses of belonging. At a theoretical level they post an interesting alternative to the idea of roots, which depicts the relationship between place and culture as isomorphic and homelands as discreet and bounded entities.

Dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel a supplement; roots always precede routes. But what would happen, I began to ask, if travel were untethered, seen as a complex or pervasive spectrum of human experiences? Practices of displacement might emerge as constitutive of cultural meaning rather than as their simple transfer or extension. Cultural centers, discrete regions and territories, do not exist prior to contacts, but are sustained through them, appropriating and disciplining the restless movements of people and things (Clifford, 1998:3 cited in Friedmann 1998:733).

Thus, the notion of *routes* encapsulates a myriad of ways though which mobile individuals experience feelings of home, either in spite or because of movement by acknowledging that *"increasingly one is seen as moving between homes, erstwhile to current; or as moving between multiple homes, or as being at home in continuous movement"* (Rapport and Dawson 1998: 27).

For example, James Clifford (1994) explores the role of travel and movement as opposed to fixity and place. In *Diasporas*, he examines the way in which *"diaspora discourses represent experiences of displacement and of constructing homes away from home"* (Clifford, 1994: 302). Clifford describes how diasporic communities experience feelings of home through the re-enactment of the culture and tradition in "the home away". In this sense, Clifford describes the ways in which Diasporic communities reconcile the place "where they come from" with the place "where they live". We can think about the existence of *mobile roots* in the sense that we can take along space and time certain aspects of our place of origin and the things that make us "who we are".

b. How is space (re)inhabited?

If the aim is to de-naturalize the links between people and place one has to think about the ways in which such links are constructed. Sara Ahmed (1999) starts to answer this question by acknowledging a dislocation of the homes of mobile individuals "where I come from" and "where I usually live ". In resonance with the routes perspective she states that we can feel at home through story telling and remembering past homes, we can also feel at home in a new place by re-inhabiting a space. To re-inhabit space and charge it with meaning, one must be touched and changed by the place and the other way around. In this sense, Ahmed suggests that *"the border between the home and the self is permeable, but also that the boundary between the home and the away is permeable as well"* (Ahmed, 1999: 342).

In the same line of thought Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1975) talks about a *"sense of place"* when referring to the feelings of belonging to a given place. To acquire a sense of place, he states, one requires some distancing from it and it is more the result of a purposeful interaction than the result of a natural bond. To acquire a sense of place one must experience the place in its full dimension, it is not only by visual interaction or merely passing by that gets to bond with a place and produce a sense of being at home (Proshansky et al 1983, Tuan

1975). Instead one has to let the place "intrude" our senses through smelling, touching and hearing the place.

Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement. It is possible to appreciate the visual qualities of a place with one short visit, but not how it smells on a frosty morning, how city sounds reverberate across narrow streets to expire over the broad square, or how the pavement burns through gym shoe soles and melts bicycle tires in August (Tuan, 1975: 164).

To feel at home in a place is the result of a purposeful interaction with it: its physical setting, the relationships it engenders and the routines and habits that happen within it. According to these perspectives, we feel at home in a place by experiencing it, and it is through this lived experience that we achieve a sense of belonging and easiness paramount for the feeling at home.

For example, in a mirror research from my own, Anna Ortiz and Cristóbal Mendoza (2008) describe how Spanish migrants experience and dwell in Mexico City. As part of their strategy to feel at home in a place that has been described as one of the most insecure cities in the world, they look for safe havens, such as close gated communities or high income neighborhoods that allow them to experience the place without feeling unsafe. For these Spanish migrants, getting used to new forms of transportation and locating these safe havens is a vital part of their experience.

c. Home as the center of the moving self

It has been described how feelings of home can be attached to a place where one no longer lives and it has also been described how feelings of home are attached to a new place but, what happens when this process happens simultaneously? *"home is neither here, nor there*

rather itself an hybrid, it's both here and there- an amalgam- a pastiche, a performance" in this sense home becomes a constellation of relationships with both people and places, and the feeling of home is achieved through a myriad of relationships, routines and habits. An example of this can be drawn from the work of Magdalena Nowicka (2007) on United Nations professionals. She studied a group of highly mobile professionals and the way in which they keep a sense of continuity and easiness during change and resettlement. For this group of transnationals, a constellation of relationships with people and objects constitutes their home. They rely on familiar infrastructure and a constellation of social relations that span borders. Their mobile life style as well as their way to feel at home in a given place are hugely determined by their access to certain goods, forms of communication and transportation.

Some times we do not only feel at home while moving, but that movement itself constitutes one's home, where there is no need of fixed center outside oneself and that our very personal journeying histories, transitions, constitute the center of "one's moving self" (Rapport and Dawson 1998: 27-28). It is precisely at this point of the discussion when we can re-introduce Augé's concept of the no-places. In some cases, movement becomes part of our everyday life and airports, hotels and chain restaurants become a source of comfort, precisely because its individual form of contractuality is familiar.

3.4 THE DARK SIDE OF HOME

Some critics of the use of the concept of home as a spatial metaphor to address people's significant relationships to place point out that constructing *home* as a place of belonging and easiness, obscures our understanding of the negative or ambivalent feelings towards a place (Manzo 2005, Gustafson 2001b).

Being at home is a relative concept. If you didn't have a happy childhood and someone says, "make your self at home" Does that mean I should beat the hell out of my children? (Manzo 2005: 84)

This claim is particularly vocal within feminist and queer scholars who, rightly so, point out that for heterosexual women and queers, home is the place where patriarchy is reproduced. In this sense, home seen as the domestic sphere, has been the primary place where the reproduction of hetero-normativity is reinforced and where non-normative gender and sexual identities are oppressed. Anne Marie Fortier (2003) analyzes queer migrations from this perspective. The journeys of queer migrants are viewed as double process where the "moving out" facilitates the "coming out". In this sense, the journeys of some queer migrants, involve a necessary leaving one home, the domestic and familial space, to arrive to a home where their sexual and gender identities can be fully expressed. She points out towards the existence of "queer cultural homelands" that offer the hope of finding a home where they can fully and freely express their identities, in a world where home is a function of heterosexuality.

Thus, although feeling at home can be constructed as a sense of belonging and easiness, the concept of *home* itself does not come as uncontested. Certain aspects of a home-place can embrace us while others can reject us, it is through of the balance between the positive and negative aspects of a home-place that we can come to an understanding of what does home mean and how do we get to feel at home. In other words, we can understand which the sources of the feelings of home are.

In this sense, the dislocation of the dimensions of home in mobile individuals provides a great leverage, to understand what make us feel good in a given place. As Tuan (1975) states, *"Things too close to us can be handled, smelled, and tasted, but they cannot be seen, at least not clearly"*. Following this logic, James Kelly (1985) on his work about a the generation of US-American writers in Paris during the 1920's, explains how the movement allowed them ponder the positive and negative aspects of their homeland and write about the aspects that made that particular place their home in a conscious way.

By comparing and contrasting the home place with the new place, landscape features and human activities of the home place could be preferred or rejected, which was much different than just accepting them. (Kelly, 1985: 62)

In this sense, movement produces an estrangement from a given home place. The attachments and feelings that might have been experienced in an unreflective and unconscious way, become more apparent (Ahmed 1999, Tuan 1985). At the end of the day, mobility might challenge preconceived notions surrounding a bounded sense of belonging to a given place, but at the same time, it makes us think about the things that make us feel-at-home or out-of-place, thus it gives the opportunity to lose some local constraints while keeping the significant aspects of home.

3.5 AS A WAY TO CONCLUDE

As it has been shown home is a multi-layered and multi-scalar phenomenon. It is multi-layered because it involves notions of familiarity, security, predictability, just to mention some examples. It is multi-scalar because it can be experienced in a room, a house, a neighborhood or the nation, for example.

Duyvendak (2011), provides a table with some of the elements of home that are found in the literature: familiarity, safety, predictability; and these elements can be found in a range of scales individual level, at the level of the household or at the level of the community.

I. Familiarity.

Knowing the place

II. Haven

Physical/Material safety; mentally safe/predictable

Place for retreat, relaxation, intimacy and domesticity

III Heaven

A public place where one can collectively be, express and realize oneself; where one feels publicly free and independent. Home here embodies shared histories; a material and/or symbolic place with one's own people and activities.

(Duyvendak, 2011: 38)

It has been shown how home is a familiar place, or how we search for *familiarity* to achieve a feeling of home. This happens through a deep unselfconscious process that is associated with the idea of *roots* or as a process that happens overtime, a *sense of place*.

For people who move constantly, this familiarity has little to do with place and more to do with the routines and habits that happen within it. Nowika's study on UN professionals shows that this familiarity can be achieved by recurring arrangements or routines that are not place specific. I have suggested that Augé's "non places" and their individual forms of contractuality can also engender feelings of home, because the practices that happen within it are somewhat predictable. Mendoza and Ortiz-Guitart work on Spanish immigrants in Mexico City, show how this familiarity is first and foremost achieved through the location of safe *havens* where they are isolated from some aspects of their new home place,

Home as *haven* as shown in the table also refers to notions of domesticity, and it is perhaps the place where individual agents feel at home. Because of this, it is also associated with ideas of tradition and re-production of heteronormativity. Although this idea of home as *haven* is associated with ideas of retreat, privacy and intimacy, the examples on the dark side of home show is that home can also be a place of oppression, it can be domestic violence or the marginalization of identities that do not fit in. We have talked about the way in which the domestic aspect of home has changed for example in the households of some Spanish families and the families of those immigrant women who are part of the so-called global chains of care. It has been also suggested that for some, like queer migrants, the traditional idea of home as *haven* might imply a feeling of alienation.

If home as *haven* is related to ideas of individuality, privacy and intimacy, home as *heaven* is inherently collective and public. The idea of a collective home articulates much of the debate

around place and belonging since the nation is perhaps one of the prime examples of this particular concept of home. For example, Duyvendak (2011) has shown how there is a strong reaction against immigrants in the Netherlands because the Dutch feel that their collective home is being threatened.

In contrast, a great part of the construction of this collective home has been focused on the ways in which migrant populations re-create this idea of home as *heaven* in their new places of residence. This re-creation is materialized, for example, in "ethnic" neighborhoods, religious or national parties, or in the private sphere through the everyday life.

Although the expression and recognition of place-based identities constitutes an important part of the home-making experiences of migrants, there are other aspects of identity that come into play. One example can be the expression of non-heteronormative sexual and gender identities, as depicted in the work by Fortier. In this specific work it will be shown how, expressing and reproducing a class-based identity constitutes an integral part of the home-making experiences of middling migrants.

4. CONCEPTUAL TOOLKIT FOR THE STUDY OF HOME (AWAY FROM HOME)

The last chapter argued against the idea of the world divided in discreet separate entities that is sustained by an isomorphic conception of the relationship between people, culture and place. Instead, it argued for a way of thinking about the world that resembles a "global tapestry" where a multiplicity of relations and practices work as linking threads that are stretching throughout the globe, which not only connect but construct a multiplicity of places whose particularity lays in the fact that nowhere else that particular combination of "threads" exist.

A proportion of the social interrelations will be wider than and go beyond the area being referred to in any particular context as that place... a large component of the identity of that place called home derived precisely from the fact that it had always in one way or another been open; constructed out of movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it (Massey, 1994: 169 and 171)

Thus, a place and consequently home, are open and made of a group of intersecting relationships and practices. But it has also been argued that such practices and relationships intersect under asymmetrical vectors of power. What do I mean by this? In the context of (international) mobility some people are better positioned and more in control than others of these processes and intersections and this has direct impact on their ability to cope with movement and change. Thus,

Different social groups have distinct relationships to this anyway differentiated mobility: some people are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and

movement, others don't; some are more on the receiving-end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it. (Massey, 1994: 149)

This differentiation influences the way in which individuals conceive home and how they relate to their home-places, as well as the ways in which they construct a feeling of home. In this sense, the way in which a mobile individual conceives and experiences home is hugely dependent on how much control they on the migratory process: the context from where they depart and in which they arrive, and the forms of capital they have access to in order to "refashion" their identities in a new setting.

Although optimist approaches to human mobility often depict it as limitless and empowering⁵, the ability to move and to (perhaps) settle, ultimately rests on the power of border controls and policing of who does and who does not belong. Thus it is important to take into account the individuals' relation to power (in its varied forms) and the social and economic contexts in which their identity has been (trans) formed.

In this context of asymmetrical vectors of power and under the idea that relations and practices work as linking threads around the globe, the inquiry on home and home making practices of dislocated or multi-located populations benefits from two theoretical trends: Post colonial theory and studies on transnationalism.

First, postcolonial theory, outlines the prevailing vectors of power, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic, that shape the terms under which this overlapping practices take place in different locations. This idea will be elaborated further on the chapter "Our home: The roots and routes of Mexican identity. Second, transnationalism studies, broadly understood as the multiple practices (economic, political, cultural, personal) that are sustained through constant contacts and travel across national borders, complicate even more conventional understandings of homes and communities as stable, spatially fixed locations, from which migrants depart and in which they relocate "new" homes (Ahmed, 2003: 3).

⁵ This of course in contrast with the reactionary discourses I have mentioned time and again throughout the work.

The challenge of studying a multilayered and multi-scalar phenomenon as the construction of home, particularly in the context of human mobility, is to find a theoretical lens that allows us to see how people relate to different scales which can range from a room, to a neighborhood, to a city, to a nation. Of course, such lens has to contemplate that these relations are not only dependent on the actions and volition of the individual at a micro level but are also determined by processes at a meso and macro level. The tension between structure and agency in a transnational setting, is solved by the idea of a transnational social field. Transnational processes are seen through the idea of social fields posted by Bourdieu (Basch, Blanc and Glick-Schiller, 1995; Glick-Schiller and Levitt, 2004; Suarez Navaz, 2008).

This chapter will explain the theoretical lenses and categories that will guide the work. In order to do so, it will start by explaining the basic ideas behind Bourdieu's theory. This has a double purpose, it helps to explain the theory behind the conceptualization the transnational social field and it sets the grounds to understand delineate who the middling migrants are, and what are the prevailing vectors of power in which they are positioned.

4.1 THE FIELD, THE GAME, THE CAPITALS AND THE HABITUS

Pierre Bourdieu reconciles this tension between structure and agency by looking at the social universe as a *field* where the different actors struggle to either reproduce the hegemonic structures or to improve their position within the structures. Such structures are reproduced or modified through a *distinction game*, which is described as a cards game where the different cards are associated with different sorts of *capital* and such capitals have different values, or *prestige*. The value or prestige associated with each form of capital depends on the field where the game is being played. By discovering which forms of capital can become efficient or constitute the "ace" we can begin to understand the main factors of differentiation in a given social universe.

Which are these capitals? Bourdieu studied French society as a social field and discovered that the main forms of capital, in order of importance were: *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized as property

rights and *cultural capital*, information, which is embodied and under certain conditions can be convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualification (cf, 1986: 47). Followed by two forms of capital which are strongly correlated, *social capital* understood as the resources based on connections and membership to a group and *symbolic capital* the other name for distinction, which is the form the different types of capital take once they are perceived and recognized as legitimate (cf. 1984: 4). The position of the agents in the social space depends on the volume and composition of their capitals, and their trajectory within the social space, this is how much and what kind of capitals they accumulate overtime.

The form that is taken, at every moment, in each social field, by the set of distributions of the different kinds of capital (embodied or materialized), as instruments for the appropriation of the objectified product of accumulated social labor, defines the state of the power relations, institutionalized in long-lasting social statuses, socially recognized or legally guaranteed, between social agents objectively defined by their position in these relations; it determines the actual or potential powers within the different fields and the chances of access to the specific profits that they offer (1985:725)

Why are agents playing these games and how do they learn the rules? Bourdieu talks about *habitus* as "*principles of the generation of and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules*" (2009: 72). This is to say, habitus is what makes the actors reproduce the structures of the field and to an extent what provides the starting capitals and the ability to change its volume, composition and trajectory. To an extent habitus is a flexible disposition a "*principle of regulated improvisation*"(78).

If we look at the social space, one must remember that this is purely a theoretical tool, so this space does not resemble the geographical space, but it could be thought of as the key to a

map. Once we find the value or prestige to each capital we can begin to understand "the map". In any case in this theoretical space, people with similar habitus will be closer in the map. This closeness or similarity is what lays behind the idea of a group or social class. In Bourdieu's (2009) words *"The objective homogenizing of group or class habitus which results from homogeneity of the conditions of existence is what enables practices to be objectively harmonized"* (80).

4.1.2 The transnational social field

In the last chapter the idea of a naturalization of the links between people and place was discussed through the idea of roots. Under this idea, movement implied severing the roots with the place from which migrants depart and with movement people became either uprooted or transplanted. The transnational lens, acknowledges the fact that sometimes movement derives in a multiplicity of attachments to different places: the everyday lives of some migrants depend on multiple connections across international borders and their public identities are configured by more than one nation-state (cf. Basch, Blanc and Glick-Schiller, 1995:48). The idea of a transnational social field as proposed by Bach, Blanc, Glick-Schiller and Levitt then, challenges the idea that there is an isomorphic relation between the nation-state and not only culture but also society which is tightly related to Massey's (2004) idea of homes place being open and constructed out of stretching relations,

National boundaries are not necessarily contiguous with the boundaries of social fields. National social fields are those that stay within national boundaries while transnational social fields connect actors through direct and indirect relations across borders (Levitt and Glick-Schiller, 2004: 1009).

The proponents of the transnationalization of social fields argue that keeping the analysis focused on the containers of the nation-state obscures the myriad of ways in which mobile populations relate to place and encourages researchers to keep in mind that there is a certain

bias, which they call "methodological nationalism" that can take three main forms:

1) Ignoring or disregarding the fundamental importance of nationalism for modern societies. This tendency often goes hand and hand with 2) naturalization, or taking for granted that the boundaries of the nation-state delimit and define the unit of analysis. Finally, 3) territorial limitation confines the study of social processes to the political and geographic boundaries of a nation-state (Glick-Schiller and Levitt, 2004:1007).

In this sense, the idea of a transnational social field reformulates our understanding society since the lives of increasing number of people are embedded in a multi-layered and multi-sited field that encompasses not only those who move, but also those who apparently remain put: *the concept of social fields is a powerful tool for conceptualizing the potential array of social relations linking those who move and those who stay behind* (Levitt and Glick-Schiller, 2004: 1003).

But as Suárez Navaz (1998) points out the transnational social field is not limited to social networks, but it is also related to the logics of globalization and late capitalism. A flexible market and the governability of moving populations, mark this historical phase. In this game what is at stake is the creation of flexible agents that have fragmented senses of belonging. Who are the key players in this transnational game?

Suarez Navaz (1998) outlines three key actors: the moving actors (migrants), the state and the middling organizations such as NGO's, associations and small entrepreneurs. What the migrants have at stake is the transference of capitals: moving from one field to another implies that some privileges related to the possession of certain capitals are lost and some are won. States need to secure a certain loyalty to the nation-state while encouraging a certain degree of flexibility to reap from the benefits of a globalized economy. Sending states might facilitate this fragmented sense of belonging by allowing the possession of dual citizenship or establishing channels for the influx of remittances. Receiving states might police movement and subject immigrants to different degrees of exploitation. Middling organizations might

have a myriad of interests at stake: from economic, to political gain (cf. 930-31).

Such stakes are neither the result of an individual rational calculus nor the result of a mechanical reproduction of insurmountable the structures, what is set in motion in a transnational setting is the interplay of different sorts of capital at different scales, where the here and there influence the way in which the game is played.

4.2 THE MIDDLE MIGRANT

The study of migration and movement is usually approached from two polarized views. On the one hand there is a clear strand of research that focuses on the so-called “economic migrants” which are object of strict regulation and control, and are generally presented as "problematic" in the public discourse. On the other hand, and in much lesser quantity, there is the study of a population that is perceived as “elite migration”, for whom borders do not count and it represents an almost romanticized version of mobility.

This work tries to provide a more nuanced view of the international movers and tries to break this polarized view of migrants by introducing the study of a fairly neglected portion of the moving population: the middling migrants. Bluntly described by Wiles (2008) as *"neither elite nor extremely poor or in dire straits but very much in the middle"*, the middling migrants are usually skilled workers, holidaymakers, students, retirees and adventurers and their main characteristics are that they occupy a middle status position in their countries of origin and that they are usually educated (Conradson and Latham, 2005; Favell, 2008; Wiles, 2008).

In this sense, the occupants of middle positions within the field, owe their position to the average value of their properties but also, because they occupy a neutral point and are balanced between two polarized positions (*Bourdieu, 1987:12*). Thus, because of their level of skill and their class status in the countries of origin, the study of the experiences of the middling migrants tends to disappear between the two extreme poles of the "economic" and the "elite" migrants.

Authors routinely refer to higher-end migrants as "elites" usually as a stylized contrast to the disadvantaged, lower class, typically ethnic distinct, putatively proletariat migration that is the concern of most researchers in the field (Favell, Feldblum and Smith, 2007: 16)

Being neither disadvantaged nor lower class, nor the kind of global financial elite that the literature on higher-end migration tends to depict, middling migrants move not because a narrow economic calculus, but because they might be seeking for other sorts of capital and means of distinction (Scott 2006: 1109). Since middling migrants occupy intermediate positions in the social space, their principles of distinction are marked by an indeterminacy and fuzziness, unlike the more clear-cut differences between the agents positioned at the polar opposites of this distribution. Because of this fuzziness, middling migrants have a wider variety of strategies to position themselves in the space left by the economic and elite migrants (Bourdieu, 1987:12).

With their most immediate needs covered in their countries of origin, and without a career path dictated by a corporation, middle class migration seems to be more related to an acquisition of symbolic capital through a path of self-realization and a need to have more do-it-yourself biographies facilitated by their socio-economic status, a flexible labor market and the general availability of faster means of communication and transportation.

4.2.1 Five assumptions that narrow the field

Within the logics of late capitalism and globalization there are three interrelated processes that have set up the stakes for the game in the transnational social field: the transnationalization of production, the spread of multinational enterprises; and technological change. These interrelated processes are dependent upon the flexibility for the movement of capital, goods, information and people.

The structure thus is dependent on mobility, but such mobility has to be channeled and regulated. In this setting, unskilled migration has been the focus of regulatory endeavors

while skilled labor has gone through a substantial degree of de-regularization. This might explain to some degree the polarization in the study of international migration. On the one hand there is a great percentage of migration that is framed as unskilled, problematic and in need of regulation and on the other there is a small fraction of the moving population that is considered to be highly skilled, welcomed and encouraged. Middling migration stands in between these two conceptions but it somehow is made less evident by clustering it with one side or the other. Thus, middling migrants are *"in a state of unstable equilibrium and wavering between two opposed alliances (and) the object of completely contradictory classifications by those who try, in the political struggle, to win them over to their side"*. Favell, Feldblum and Smith (2008) highlight five assumptions under which the study of highly skilled migration works. These five assumptions provide the basis to understand the polarized views around migration and help us to understand the way in which middling migrants are positioned within the transnational social field. This because such misconceptions are constructed around one of their main characteristics: institutionalized cultural capital, their degree of skill.

a. Highly-skilled equals elite migration

This is perhaps the most pervasive preconception on the study of the highly skilled. Although authors tend to recognize that "the highly skilled" encompasses a series of professions, levels of skill and niches of incorporation making it an heterogeneous category that can include from financial experts, to nurses and certain types students (Iredale, 2001), the most popular depiction of the highly skilled is presented in the form of the corporate transferee, managerial elite or expat, specially those working on the services industry (finance and technology, mainly) and preferably inhabiting "global cities" such as London, New York, Paris or Tokyo. The focus on such migrants in those specific cities is not undeserved. The decades of 1980's and 1990's saw an unprecedented project of privatization of services traditionally linked to national governments and a series of projects all over the world focused on an economic

liberalization, that was fostered by a *"relentless push towards global production through the elimination of state intervention in a host of economic issues, from tariffs to workers rights"* (Glick-Schiller and Calar, 2009; pp. 179). The result of this economic restructuring was an intensification of globalization characterized by a newly found flexibility and mobility of people and monies, and the polarization of migrant flows (Sassen, 2001).

It was during the mid-1980's that Friedman (1986) published a seminal work on the impact of that the neoliberal restructuring process was having on the urban scale. Under what he labeled as the "World City Hypothesis" he identified a London, New York and Tokyo as the top of a hierarchy of cities leading this transformation of the global economy since these cities had deregulated financial sectors and rapidly attracted a myriad of service oriented industries (in Ley, 2004: 152). Subsequent work on the "world cities" has presented images of these cities as the central nodes of global financial markets and consequently as a magnet for migration (Sassen, 2001). The picture provided by this breakthrough works on the impacts of globalization and neoliberal restructuring on cities, is one of economic polarization, in Sassen's words:

The influxes of high-level professionals and high-profit making specialized service firms have the effect of raising the degree of spatial and socioeconomic inequality evident in these cities. (Sassen, 2001: xxi)

Accordingly, much of the research on the highly-skilled is focused on its impacts on the re-scaling of these specific cities and its contribution to a further polarization between rich and poor migrants or, in other words between "elite" and "economic" migrants. Economic polarization resulting from the neoliberal restructuring was such, that alongside the narratives around refugees, displaced populations and economic migrants, there were the narratives of what David Ley wittily calls *"the masters of the universe"* (2004: 152). This small, but incredibly privileged fraction of the population was, at a micro-scale, the uncontested beneficiary of the liberalization and globalization of the economy. As a result, the research

on the "highly-skilled" has been seen as interchangeable with "elite migration", thus the level of qualification of the migrants is portrayed as intrinsically linked with a high socioeconomic status in both sending and receiving countries.

Authors routinely refer to higher end migrants as "elites" usually as a stylized contrast to the disadvantaged, lower class, typically ethnic distinct, putatively proletariat migration that is the concern of most researchers in the field (Favell, Feldblum and Smith, 2007: 16)

However and as it was mentioned at the beginning of this subsection, the universe of the highly skilled encompasses a wide variety of people of diverse national origins, gender, social class and training. In the following subsections some of the preconceptions sustaining this polarization between migrant populations will be addressed and at the same time, a space for the study of the middling migrant will be built.

b. Highly-Skilled migration is demand-driven

Much of the research has been concentrated in researching the recruitment process and mobility strategies implemented by Transnational Corporations (TNC's) and Multinational Corporations (MNC's) to attract and relocate highly qualified personnel. As a consequence the narratives around the highly skilled are embedded in a highly institutionalized context that most of the time details patterns of mobility previously established by national governments to fulfill the agenda and expectations of the global market (See Beaverstock, 2005 and Vertovec, 2002).

By doing so, research neglects those who move to their destination countries prior to incorporation into the local labor market. A clear example of this are international students, trailing partners and sojourners, who tend to explore their options within a given location and

seek for a job once they familiarized with the new environment and established networks in their new place of residence.

Not all the movement and recruitment of foreign skills is initiated by the demand side.

Many overseas nationals come to the UK as part of their own training and experience plan ... this is one reason why many, perhaps most, foreign highly skilled workers are already in the host country at the time of their application for recruitment. (Koser and Salt, 1997: 290)

There is a growing body of work surrounding international students and their strategies to obtain a first international experience right after graduation. People move around for many reasons including education, romance, adventure, curiosity and most of the time these movers are not hired before the movement happens. Therefore, migration of the highly skilled more often than not defies the "Pareto-optimal" portrayal of highly qualified migration that assumes that the receiving countries directly select skilled migration and therefore it posts no challenge to the local societies since skilled migrants tend to fill a void that is left by the locals.

c. The movement of the highly skilled is seen in terms of drain or gain.

The first wave of studies on the highly-skilled were articulated under the notion of mobility of the highly skilled as a zero-sum game where for every brain gained by a society, there was a brain lost somewhere else. The idea of brain-drain precipitated the fears that the movement of highly skilled people from one place to another would perpetuate patterns of uneven development, this because migration was conceived upon the idea of transplantation and uprootedness (Nagel, 2005; p. 198).

Overtime, the second wave of studies on transnationalism, provided a more nuanced view of the impacts of the international movement of the highly skilled. This because under this

second wave of studies on transnationalism, international movers were no longer seen as transplants that moved from one place to another losing their ties with the sending countries. Instead, it allowed the study of back and forth movements of migrants between sending and receiving societies and the diverse ties that bind people to places even if there is no physical presence.

There have emerged a number of schemes and types of transnational networks of expatriate professionals that can be tapped to enable their effective and productive role in a home country's development – even without any physical temporary or permanent return. These are what Meyer and Brown (1999) call 'distant cooperative work' within an intellectual diaspora. Although such links have existed in one form or another in the past, they are now becoming systematic, dense and multiple (Vertovec, 2005; p. 7-8).

Thus, the brain gain-brain loss perspective alone, fails to contemplate two things: first there is potential lose of human capital (brain waste) in every circumstance where the labor market fails to incorporate a skilled individual whether immigrant or local, and movement from one place to another often enhances the chance to find a job that meets the qualifications of the international mover (Castaños-Lomnitz, 2003; Bolay and Tejada, 2005); second, even if migration is permanent, which in the majority of the cases it is not, migrants of all levels of qualification tend to preserve, nurture and create ties with their home-countries. In the specific case of the highly qualified there is the case of "scientific diasporas" and networks of professionals that not only that tend to preserve links with the sending societies, but actively contribute to their development (Szelényi, 2008; Vertovec).

d. Skilled workers are welcomed and their mobility is frictionless

In contrast to the strict state regulation and stigmatization imposed upon unskilled migrants, highly skilled migration is seen as the least controversial form of international migration. In some cases skilled migration is even institutionally encouraged by international treaties such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and, as it has been mentioned before, by transnational or multinational corporations.

Authors and policy makers alike, tend to see this kind of migration as unproblematic because it is easily regulated in terms of number of work permits and taxation, but also because of its small numbers. However, the migration of the highly skilled, even if welcomed is still strictly regulated and policed by the receiving states. Even more, state regulation and corporate hiring processes are not "color blind". At a state level, national quotas for international workers can be set and at a micro level, as Catherine Nagel puts it eloquently, non-white immigrants can suffer a form of hidden racism through career stagnation:

Highly developed states, while eager to attract skilled workers, have a well documented history of ambivalent attitudes toward "non-white" immigrants, and, not surprisingly, there is evidence that skilled workers from the developing world experience racism and career stagnation (Robinson and Carey, 2000; Hawthorne, 1997). The experiences of skilled migrant workers in highly developed economies, therefore vary widely. (Nagel, 2005)

A perfect example of such ambivalent treatment of immigrants who might be rich in all sorts of capital but lack the symbolic capital, in this case "whiteness", are the group of Chinese entrepreneurs depicted in Aihwa Ong's (1999) "Flexible citizenship" in where she shows that even in cases of extreme privilege and ability to manipulate schemes of difference, the accumulation of capital has its limits.

e. Human capital can be "translated"

The study of economic migrants has left us with an invaluable lesson: there are formal and informal barriers for the incorporation of migrants in a new society. Among the formal barriers the most evident is "the papers", knowing the informal barriers however, needs a closer look to the immigrant and its surroundings.

Evidently, and as it has been shown, highly skilled immigrants tend to have an advantage over unskilled migration in terms of immigration procedures and overall mobility. Nonetheless, the highly skilled movement imposes a set of challenges that are generally overlooked by the tendency of the field to concentrate the study on "corporate movers". Studies on the so-called "expats" draw a community of international movers that is generally disengaged from the everyday life on the receiving societies. These kind of highly skilled workers are literally transplanted from one international community to another, and face little if any challenges in their everyday lives, since the corporate structure takes care of basic needs such as housing, schooling and even socialization. (Yeoh and Khoo, 1998; Scott, 2006; Beaverstock, 2005; Nowicka, 2007)

Magdalena Nowicka in her study on the "chronically mobile", offers a window to the lives of workers in an international organization and the way in which their mobility is structured by the organization:

The institutional structure of the international organization enforces this way of designing one's life (chronically mobile). It also supports the mobility of its employees in various ways. For example, the international organization's employees' organization gives advice on how to make the process of moving one's household and family less frustrating and less time-consuming. The international organization's advisory networks provide assistance in housing, selecting quality childcare and schooling and job searches for spouses. (Nowicka, 2007; pp 76)

However, "free movers" or those highly skilled that move internationally outside a corporate structure, face everyday challenges that in many cases are not too different from the ones that

unskilled migrants face. The lack of local know-how and cultural savviness can result in, just as an example, over priced housing in comparison to the overall population, social isolation due to the lack of local networks or overpriced access to health services (Favell, 2009; Nagel 2005; Yeoh, 2005).

The fact is, with or without skills, national boundaries and "difference" still post challenges in the everyday life of immigrants, even if those challenges are not presented as formal barriers. Mobility posts challenges even for "invisible" whiter migrants as Favell illustrates in his three front case study of intra-European mobility "Eurostars in Eurocities" (2009). In his book, Favell shows how even inside the Europe without borders, the new citizens of Europe, suffer from career stagnation, a downward spiral in terms of prestige and might experience feelings of alienation in cosmopolitan and "open" cities.

4.3 CONCLUSION

As it will be shown, in the context of the home-making practices of middling migrants there is a tension between reaping from the benefits of mobility while keeping their roots. While the reproduction of a place-based identity is indeed important, the reproduction of a class-based identity takes a predominant role in their home-making practices. This is to say, in a transnational social field what is at stake for the middling migrant is the reproduction of a middle class identity. Their position in the field determines their immigration and incorporation channels and ultimately those determine their access to certain jobs and lifestyles, which in turn mark their ability to feel at home in one place (or another).

This reproduction is highly dependent on the context from which they depart and in which they arrive. As it happens with all movers, their experiences are shaped by a series of privileges and constraints that are related to the changing labor markets, the governmental and local attitudes on migration and the socio-economic and political climate of the time and places in which they transit. The difference perhaps, lays on the fact that they have at hand a wider variety of strategies to adapt to these changes because of their middling position, not only in the class structures, but sometimes also as intermediaries of the economic, human and

cultural fluxes between fields. In a sense, they tend to be more flexible than those who are positioned in the opposite poles.

The reproduction of a middle class identity involves that their capitals are recognized in another social field. They also need to learn which are the "aces" in the new field and find ways to accumulate new forms of capital. Of course, and it has been mentioned before, this accumulation has its limits and so is their ability to surmount some of the structural constraints towards mobility and, ultimately, their ability to feel at home in a new place. In this sense, middling migrants are involved in a symbolic struggle between the two poles of migration and the ambivalent attitudes of national governments and locals to such migrations. It involves the recognition of their institutionalized cultural capital, their credentials, but also the recognition of other forms of symbolic capital. It also involves the acquisition or accumulation of other types of capitals in a new setting: social capital, insider's knowledge and overall knowing which are the "aces" in the new game.

5. OUR HOME: THE ROOTS AND ROUTES OF MEXICAN IDENTITY



Poster of Chichen Itzá in Plaza de España⁶

This chapter addresses the construction of home as *heaven* to at the national scale, which is often pointed out in scholarly studies as the construction of a national identity. In this context nationalism is interpreted as a "structure of feeling" that transforms a place into a home-place by an active construction of a national identity that pinpoints and essentialises the markers that indicate the belonging to the nation and sets the grounds to establish its interaction with Others (Alonso, 1994:386).

⁶ There are many Mexicos. Discover yours

The construction of what can be understood as the "collective home" of Mexicans started with a process of decolonization, which according to many authors was incomplete (Bonfil Batalla, Stavenhagen, Quijano). While in the post-revolutionary and current discourse, the national identity of Mexicans has been defined as an hybrid identity, at an individual level their access to power and social recognition, their belonging to the collective home, is directly linked to their situatedness in a society that claims to have roots in two identities that were constructed under profound asymmetry: the Spanish and the Indigenous. In this context, the ambivalent relationship of Mexico and its colonial past comes to the fore.

In this chapter, I will address the way in which Spanish and Indigenous identities came to place and will describe the historical process through which they were reconciled to form a new national identity: the mestizo. To do so, I will explore the different governmentalities and regimes that characterized the subtle exercise of power in three different historical moments: the Colonial era, the Porfirian era and the Post-revolutionary era.

As a way to conclude this chapter I will provide some insight on the way in which this governmentalities have impact on the everyday lives of Mexicans living in Madrid and its relation with the shared colonial past. As a whole this chapter shows how, the boundaries of a place-based identity intersect with the ideas surrounding class-based identity, particularly in the context of a deeply stratified society along the lines of race and ethnicity. This particular intersection sets which are the "aces" to construct a feeling of belonging not only to Mexico, but to start to feel at home in Madrid.

5.1 WE ARE MESTIZO... ARE WE?

Güero, ra.

(indigenous voice)

1.adj.Mex. Said about a person: Who has blond hair.

DRAE (own translation)

I have frequently heard it used in Mexico in the following contexts⁷:

¡Pásele güerita! as a common phrase that starts an informal business transaction.

Pues salió güerito. as a common response if you ask about a new born.

¿Por qué tan sola güerita? as a common catcall.

Prieto, ta

(from squeeze)

1.adj. Closely fitted, hard, dense.

2.adj. Said about a color: very dark and almost undistinguishable from black.

3.adj. Miserable, scarce, greedy.

4.adj.Cuba. Said about a person: Of black race.

5. adj. Mex. Said about a person: Of dark skin.

DRAE (own translation)

There are several Mexican authors, chief amongst them Octavio Paz (2007), Pablo González

⁷ Come in güerita!/ It came out güerito/Why so lonely guerita?

Casanova (2003), Guillermo Bonfil (1996) and Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1992), who claim that in Mexico the process of decolonization was incomplete as the internal colonial structure of power was not completely eliminated. In the following lines I would like to "beat the dead horse" one more time to illustrate to what extent this internal form of colonialism pervades everyday life in Mexico and how it is reproduced everyday in inconspicuous ways.

Look back at the epigraph in the beginning of the section. The definition of the word *güero* provided by the DRAE (Dictionary Royal Spanish Academy) is at best incomplete. One of the meanings of *güero* can indeed be blonde, but the word has a wider meaning that reflects the way in which colonial stratification permeates everyday and contemporary life in Mexico. Its use in everyday life can refer to a blond person, a person with "whiter" features and/or a person with higher socioeconomic status. It is a term of endearment, a compliment and/or an indicator of a recognized socioeconomic position. It is a symbol of relative power over others, and this power can be economic, social, bodily and/or aesthetic. Thus a *güero(a)* is a *güero(a)* independently of the color of his/her hair.

Thus, the notion of the *güero* is a relative term that evokes a sense of privilege, more specifically a Eurocentric privilege. While we talk about the *güero* in the public space and often as a form of flattery, we keep silent about its counterpart: the *prieto(a)*. We just say IT out loud just when we really mean it, when we want to hurt someone and put him/her back in place, which is at the bottom of the social, economic, cultural and/or aesthetic ladder.

The pervasiveness of the term *güero* is just one more example of how even though the national identity of Mexicans has been defined as an mestizo identity, at an individual level their access to power and social recognition is directly linked to their situatedness in a society that claims to have roots in two identities constructed under profound asymmetry during the colonial era. Such asymmetry was not only perpetuated but perhaps, made more acute during the first hundred years of Mexico's independent life. It was until the revolution of 1910 that there was an attempt to reconcile and recognize both identities as constitutive of the nation.

In the following section I will describe how the idea of a mestizo national identity became the main form of governmentality in post-revolutionary Mexico as a response to the social,

economic and political polarization that brought by during the colonial period (1510-1821) and Porfirio Diaz's dictatorship (1875-1910) and as a way to present a united front against the imperialist ambitions of the U.S over Mexican territory. I will show how the regimes behind these seemingly different governmentalities steamed out from the same idea: that Indians were inherently backwards either because they were deemed racially inferior, uncivilized or because they were incorporated into the nation as part of a past that even when glorified, was best to be left behind.

5.1.1 Governmentality and the (re)production of identity

In the context of a work that deals with home and feelings of belonging, the nation is perhaps one of the places where the naturalized bonds between territory and identity become more salient. If we think back about Malkki's notion of a naturalization of the bonds between people and places in the form of a rooted belonging, the nation is conceptualized as a *"genealogical tree, rooted in a soil that nourishes it"* (1994:28). In this logic it is history, kinship and blood ties bind not only people to place, but create a sense of boundedness amongst its inhabitants: a national identity.

Of course, if the aim is to de-naturalize such bonds and think about these belongings from a critical perspective we must ask ourselves why these bonds matter and find the ways in which they are constructed not only from the perspective of the institutions in power but from the perspective of its everyday reproduction. In this sense one can think about the construction of a national identity as a purposeful and institutionalized project that permeates the everyday life.

When I talk about an institutionalized project I am talking about a series of processes that steam out of the state's apparatuses that can range from the military to the cultural policy. I am talking about a Foucauldian interpretation of state's power that is not only seen in terms of hierarchy from top to bottom and the monopoly of violence, but that includes other forms of social control and discipline through the (re) production of knowledge. This is to say, power

does not only steam from the concept of sovereignty but also from governmentality, broadly understood as the way in which the state exercises a form of "soft" power that does not rely on the threat of (the monopoly of) violence.

For the sake of clarity I will borrow Ong's (1999) own definitions of Foucault's framework:

1) Governmentality is broadly understood as the deployment of forms of non-repressive state's power aimed to discipline the population, through the bureaucratic corpus but also through other kinds of institutions that produce rules based on the knowledge and power (cf. 265). 2) Such knowledge schemes, understood as regimes, seek to normalize power relations and regulate subjects through the reproduction of particular ideas about science, culture and social life (cf. 113).

The concept of governmentality thus, can be used to describe not only the formation of a national identity within the logics of the modern nation-state, but also to shed some light in other forms of legitimation of political power over a territory and its inhabitants. To give an example that will come in handy in the next section, we can also think about a colonial governmentality, which is based on the idea of the superiority of the colonizer over the colonized, and its regime is based on theories about ethno-racial division and stratification (Suárez Navaz, 2008: 28-31).

a. Colonial governmentality (1510-1821)

The colonial domination was organized under a system of ethno-racial stratification, its governmentality was based on the definition of the colonized Other as racially, psychologically and culturally inferior to the colonizer as a way of legitimizing domination. In this sense, and as Quijano argues (2000), the idea of race is a mental construction that characterized and was created under colonial domination but it has proven to be more persistent than colonialism itself (cf. 553).

Suárez Navaz (2008) argues that in the case of colonial domination in Latin America there were two governmentality regimes that legitimized the domination of colonizers over

colonized. First, *exotization* as a way to mark differences and categorizations and *westernization* as a colonial technique that makes the Other invisible, by the way of a genocide that is physical and cultural and that normalizes "the western" (32).

Exotization came through the form of an institutionalized system of castes. There were over twenty classifications that described a hierarchical and legally based set of social relations. At the top of the hierarchy were the *peninsulares*, Spanish born in Spain and then the *criollos*, who were Spanish born in America⁸.

The most devastating effect of exotization came with the all-encompassing category of *Indian*, which was created to designate the original peoples of the continent, which were enormously varied and heterogeneous. By the art of a diffuse label, the conquered were clustered in a single category that erased their belonging to particular territories, histories and cultures. While trying to describe what being an Indian entails, Bonfil Batalla (2001) dismantles any attempt to define the Indian outside a relation of power and domination, and insists that such category does not encompass any specificity of the groups it describes but refers to their position within a set of relationships in a global social system, he insists that the category of Indian is inherently that of the colonized and it only exists within a colonial relationship (110).

The broadest process of westernization came with the category of the mestizo defined as those who descended from both Indian and Spanish. Mestizos went through an intensive process of acculturation into the colonizer's culture. This westernization resulted in its uprooting from the colonized sector, which frequently implied severing the maternal roots (as we all are hijos de la chingada, see section on la Malinche). While the Indians and blacks provided the massive labor force needed in order to sustain the colonial enterprise, *mestizos* became a broad sector that performed middling duties that the *peninsulares* and *criollos* were unable to perform because of their small numbers, but which implied a certain prestige from which the other castes had to be excluded (Bonfil Batalla, 2011: 114).

⁸ From now on the "American Continent" will be referred to as America. To avoid any misunderstandings, what is popularly known as America (the country) will be referred to with the abbreviation of its official name U.S. and its citizens will be called U.S.-Americans in contrast, the term American (without hyphenation) will be used to name the inhabitants of the whole continent.

Independently of the duties they performed within the colonial system both, *Indians* and *mestizos*, were stigmatized and placed in a position of disadvantage. The *Indians* were placed as "*passive, docile, stupid, incapable of higher civilization, lacking in emotions and sensitivity, impervious to pain and suffering, unable to improve their miserable conditions of living*". The *mestizos* in turn embodied the worst elements of both their ancestors, and were described as "*temperamental, violent, dishonest, opportunistic and lacking drive*" (cf. Stavenhagen, 1992: 427).

The system of castes included other ethno-racial categories but they are not mentioned often since they were excluded from modern Mexico's imagined community, which highlights again the effects of westernization. Although it is important to be aware of the existence of African, Arab and Asian heritages that can be traced back to the colonial period and that nowadays have been either assimilated into mainstream *mestizo* society, and thus have been westernized or marginalized and forgotten (for more on this see Bonfil Batalla, 1993). As Martínez-Montiel (1993) points out, even nowadays there is a "*creolism present in the majority of Mexicans: there is always a Spanish grandparent in the family, but the Indian or black ancestors are hidden in the kitchen*" (157).

b. Porfirian Governmentality (1876-1910)

After the war of independence, which ended in 1821, the country was submerged in an internal struggle over the direction the new nation-state would take. One of the main drives of the era was to destroy colonial institutions but the question was to what extent. One of the first steps was to abolish the legal basis of the caste system, although as it has been shown some of its effects still permeate everyday life in Mexico.

Alan Knight (1992) describes the period between 1821 and 1876 as Mexico being the "*sick man of Spanish America, a victim of febrile instability, pernicious financial anemia and a major amputation*" (101). There were liberals against conservatives, federalists against centralists, republicans against monarchists and secularists against clericalists. In addition to

the internal struggles, the sovereignty of the new nation was continuously threatened by the imperialist ambitions of Spanish, French and U.S-Americans.

In the span of 60 years, during the struggle, Mexico was an empire that lost half of its territory in the war against the U.S, a secular Republic under the rule of the first Indian president, Benito Juárez, and an empire under the dominion of the Habsburg dynasty during the second French invasion, just to mention some of the episodes that marked this convoluted era. Continuity and stability would come in 1876, when Porfirio Díaz became president and stayed in power for over thirty years.

The motto of the Porfiriato was "order and progress" and its ideologues, often described as "los científicos" (the scientists), associated progress with a Eurocentric vision of enlightenment and science. As it happened in the U.S and many South American countries, the policy resulting of such ideas was westernizing the nation under the idea that this would bring "progress". The westernization would be produced by an influx of European migration that would "whiten" the nation through a process of miscegenation.

Buchenau (2001) points out an interesting difference between the regimes behind this form of governmentality. While the U.S followed a Spencerian sociology, which stated that race and sex determined an individual's fitness for survival in a social Darwinist sense; "the scientists" in Mexico justified the whitening of the population through Comptean sociology: being white was a stage of civilization not a biological condition. These regimes, the Spencerian and Comptean, produced different outcomes. While "whiteness as fitness and survival" derived in the attraction of a human capital that would modernize the agriculture and would position its bearers as part of the working class, in Mexico the idea of "whiteness as civilized" attracted cultural and economic capital, which would place its bearers in positions of power (31-32).

The outcome of such policies was that instead of producing the "whitening" effect through miscegenation, it only reproduced the colonial hierarchical regime that the independence process aimed to abolish. At the top of the social ladder there was an enclave of privileged French, U.S-Americans, British and to a lesser extent Spanish. Next came the Mexican-born whites of European background. The mestizos who managed experience social mobility

through entrepreneurship were able to join this group, while the broad mass of mestizos and indigenous populations stayed at the bottom of the social ladder (Adler-Lomnitz and Perez-Lizaur, 1987:19).

To an extent the Porfiriato brought what it had promised: order and progress. Under the rule of Díaz, political stability was achieved and the economy developed. During that era, the country's infrastructure, industry and exports grew. Along with that, a privileged industrial class emerged and the middle class started to grow (Knight 1993: 103-104). Nonetheless during the last fifteen years of the Porfirian era, this same burgeoning middle class started to voice discontent towards what was perceived as a lack of political participation and the evident privilege foreign interests enjoyed under Díaz's government (Nutini, 1995: 325).

c. Post-revolutionary governmentality (1910-)

Díaz's government was unable to respond to any of the demands for reform and instead the country was submerged once again in a violent struggle within a deeply fragmented and stratified society. There were not only the demands from an urban middle class for political participation, but also a peasant insurrection that demanded an agrarian reform and an overall social upheaval that demanded recognition and incorporation into the nation-building project. From diverging positions within the power structure criollos, mestizos and Indians alike were demanding inclusion into the nation-building project. Thus, the Mexican revolution of 1910, contained a myriad of demands, that included particular visions about class structure and economic development but also had a strong element that included visions of political ideology and culture that brought to the fore questions surrounding liberalism, ethnicity and nationalism (Knight, 1992: 104-105).

Popular narratives and academic inquiries about the Mexican revolution and its results are filled with what Malkii calls botanical metaphors. Roots, soils, plants and hybridization are terms that are often used to describe what many authors call, in a triumphant way, "Mexico's

second independence". It comes as no surprise since one of the results of the revolution was the creation of a solidified national identity that positioned hybridization and cross-fertilization as the cornerstone of a nationalist project.

José Vasconcelos, the ideologue behind the new form of governmentality and secretary of public instruction during the 1920's, talked about the mestizos as a new "cosmic race". He wanted to put behind any trace of colonialism left in Mexico and instead of looking towards Europe to find guidance, he thought of a distinctive "third culture" that had its own identity and aesthetic style (Alonso, 2004:468).

This new form of governmentality was anti-colonial and anti-imperialist at the same time. It was anti-colonial because it attempted to erase colonial ethno-racial stratification by elevating the position of the mestizo to that of a new "cosmic race" which ostensibly celebrated the mixing of Indians and whites. It was anti-imperialist because the celebration of this cosmic race in the national imaginary contra-arrested U.S.-American imperial ambitions over Mexico, which were sustained under the pretense that Mexicans were mongrels.

Let's see the way in which noted Mexican historian, Enrique Krauze, talks about the revolution, to see the way in which the claims of authenticity and roots are made:

*The revolution ended up being the biggest myth of Mexican twentieth century not only because of the traumatic experience of the war years, because of the romantic attractiveness of its heroes, because of the destructive vortex that reached even the 1940's or because of the constructive impulse that started since the 1920's, but also because of an specific feature: its cultural originality. **Like the maguey plant, the revolution sprung and was nurtured by Mexican soil. To find its image it did not look outward and forward, but inside and backward** (emphasis added/own translation Krauze, 1999: 10).*

The revolution then, looked at the past in search for the Mexican roots. While the Indian was identified with an inert even if glorified tradition (inside and backward) the white element

represented the future (outside and forward). This new "cosmic race" represented the best of two worlds: a strongly rooted history in the Indian element that legitimized the nation's claim over the territory and a "white" element which ensured a bright future as a westernized society.

According to Bonfil Batalla (1996) within Mexican post-revolutionary governmentality, space becomes the key to set ethno-racial identities. While the rural is associated with the Indian, the urban is the space where Mexicaness is performed. It is in the urban space that streets, monuments, public squares and museums display a myriad of artistic expressions that are rooted in the Indian past while the home of living Indians, the rural space, is neglected and ignored (ch.3).

The Indian presence as depicted in murals, museums, sculptures, and archaeological sites, all open to the public, is treated essentially as dead to the rest of the world. It is a unique world, extraordinary in many of its achievements, but still a dead world... the living Indian are relegated to a second floor when they are not ignored or denied (55).

If Porfirian governmentality rested on Comptean ideas of progress, Vasconcelo's "cosmic race" resonated profoundly with the work of Gregors Mendel, "the father of modern genetics". According to Alonso (2004) post-revolutionary governmentality in Mexico produced "*an intentional process of cultural grafting and cross-fertilization*" that even when glorifying the Indigenous roots still regarded the Indian (living) subject as inert and clashing with the modern ideas of progress within the nation. In this sense, and following Mendel's laws of heredity, "white blood" would infuse the stagnant Indian with drive and purpose and would create a homogeneous national identity (Alonso, 2004: 464).

Post-revolutionary governmentality thus, generated homogeneity out of heterogeneity by "freezing" the Indian as a display in the public space and forgetting the history of those who since the colonial period had been deemed inferior (blacks, Asians, Arabs) and setting the

hopes for the future in a mestizo identity that was driven towards the future by an identity that was reinvigorated through a process of westernization.

5.2 MEXICANS IN THE VIEJA ESPAÑA

In Mexico, the idea of a "national home" was constructed by excluding several identities that were historically linked to the territory. In this sense, the national home excludes those Indian identities who refuse to lose their language and ethnic autonomies in order to fit in the narrow boundaries of belonging to the nation. For them, the Mexican imagined community is not a place where they can publicly and freely express their identities.

The impact of such mode of ethno-racial stratification permeates not only everyday life in Mexico but it guides some of the experiences of Mexicans abroad.

Over the course of the research I heard many stories involving privilege and discrimination in Spain. It was not unusual to hear Mexicans saying that Spanish were racist, but when asked to tell specific incidents involving racism they would refer to newspaper articles or episodes experienced by someone else. In a sense they felt privileged because they were able to avoid such incidents. Sometimes it was because they felt they had the ability to "pass" or because they felt racism and discrimination was not directed towards Mexicans, but towards Other national minorities. It was by manipulating schemes of difference and positioning themselves as openly *exotic* because of their Mexicaness or as *westernized* because of their whiteness that they explained how they were able to feel welcomed and at home in Madrid.

While I am in no way arguing that Spain is free from racism or that Mexicans in Spain do not experience it, to a great extent the attitudes that were framed as racist and classist, were interpreted and sometimes reproduced within a frame of experience that was learnt in Mexico. The following vignette provides an example of that.

The tale Aztec Prince in a multicultural neighborhood

At the beginning of my fieldwork, a Physicist agreed to meet me outside Lavapiés metro station at six o'clock on a Friday afternoon. He told me to wait for him on a bench and that he looked "really Mexican". After we hung up the phone I felt I had enough information to locate him. I was wrong.

I arrived to our meeting point and it turned out Lavapiés metro station might be one of the most busy and ethnically diverse locations in the city, specially during a hot summer afternoon. As I was sitting there, it dawned on me that any person coming out of that metro station could look "very Mexican".

After waiting for twenty minutes, I started to try to figure out who could be my newest informant. To the best of my knowledge I started to approach "very Mexican" looking guys to ask them if they were there to meet me. It turned out none of them were. From what I heard and saw, one might have been Spanish, other South East Asian and a last one was Argentinean.

At this point I must confess that my efforts to locate a "very Mexican-looking guy" were beyond the initial goal of having an interview. I have been denied of my Mexicaness for my looks and instead I have been placed with "the Asian minority du jour" depending on the place where I am: Indonesian in the Netherlands, sometimes Filipina or Chinese in Spain, Chinese or Japanese everywhere else, including in my own country, Mexico. So, by looking for a myriad of Mexicans I was reinstating (at least to myself) my right to identify as Mexican, even if two of my grandparents were born in China. This feeling of outsideness was not only something I experienced, but was a pervasive experience that marked the lives of the Mexicans whose background went beyond the dualization of the roots of Mexican identity.

Something I discovered in Spain, is that Mexico is made up of castes and we don't talk about it but the reality is that the country is made up of castes. And I don't know if you have experienced it, but when you have an Asian last name some of them (Mexicans) like you and some of them discriminate against you, but you have entirely different conditions. And I have noticed that it goes both sides, for better or for worse, they don't treat you the same (Mexican of Japanese descent)

But let's go back to the story. Eventually, a tall and tanned guy who was wearing his long hair in a ponytail approached me and saved me from asking a fourth and probably not-Mexican person. He was the physicist.

Later on, I told him what had just happened to me. Reflecting on the matter of his "very Mexican looks" he told me that in Mexico he didn't feel confident about his physical appearance but when he arrived in Madrid, things changed. In Spain, he said, people would look at him and women would approach him. As he grew confident about himself, he started to think about himself as an "*Aztec Prince: tall, dark and proud*". Eventually, he fell in love with a Spanish woman, found a job in his field of expertise and developed a strong attachment to Madrid.

Three years after meeting the Aztec Prince I met an engineer who had huge blue eyes, she was a Prototypical Güera. She was a smart and successful woman, who in spite of her impressing abilities and curriculum, recognized that to some extent her privileged position in Spain was the result of her ability to "fit in" a new society. As we were about to finish the conversation and I was about to turn off my recorder, she stopped me and told me she needed to say one last thing about her life in Madrid.

There is a big difference in my everyday life: that I don't look like people would expect a Mexican to look like and that makes a difference. To start with I have never been asked for my documents, they had never treated me badly... for example, I have seen that outside the train-station they stop people because they look tanned or small

or that they "sing" that they are not from here. They have no way to recognize me and that makes a difference. I think (Prototypical güera).

We were all removed, just to some extent, from the dynamics of a deeply stratified society and had the opportunity to look at ourselves from a different angle and derive some sense of privilege from it. Ironically, we were still interpreting the world around us through the same categories. The Aztec Prince found pride in his "exotic" looks, the Prototypical Güera found confirmation that indeed her "westernized" looks placed her in a position of privilege, and I was naively positioning myself outside the reproduction of these dynamics by asserting myself as a researcher and as an outsider because of my own ethnic background (but I "look" Asian for better or for worse, this is not my "game").

6. MIGRATION CHANNELS: FROM TRAITORS TO HEROES, OF FRIENDS AND FOES.

This chapter outlines the migration channels available for Mexican middling migrants to Spain, and frames such channels in the context of neoliberalism. As it has been mentioned before, within the logics of late capitalist accumulation and globalization there are three interrelated processes that have set up the stakes for the game in the transnational social field: the transnationalization of production, the spread of multinational enterprises and technological change. These interrelated processes are dependent upon the movement of capital, goods, information and people across nation-state's borders. In this sense, neoliberalism can be understood as a process of market-driven projects that aim to facilitate capitalist accumulation by redrawing the state's role in a myriad of issues.

The neoliberal project is oriented towards minimizing the role of the state, in order to facilitate an accumulation that is based on a global exchange and production of goods. This happens in varying degrees and depending on the specific context. It can involve the reduction of its role in providing certain services, the re-orientation towards private service-oriented industries, or loosing its grip on issues such as tariffs or workers rights (cf. Glick and Caglar, 2011:4).

In the words of Gupta et al (2006) the mode of governmentality in this particular era "*is characterized by a competitive market logic and a focus in a smaller government that operates from the distance*" (Gupta et al, 2006: 278). This idea of the government operating from the distance reshapes the notion of belonging to the nation-state. Nowadays, national governments encourage a certain degree of flexibility that is characterized by the idea that subjects should remain loyal to the nation-state while reaping from the benefits of a globalized economy (Ong, 1999).

With these ideas in mind, the discussion will begin with an exploration of the change of governmental attitudes on both sides of the Atlantic towards migration and the re-definition

of the notion of belonging to the nation-state. The arrival of the neoliberal era made evident that the boundaries of belonging in both countries had to be re-defined. While Mexico integrated into the global economy through the NAFTA, Spain joined the European Union, a supranational project that not only involved integrating economies but erasing certain boundaries and drawing new ones.

The narrow boundaries of belonging to the nation set in Mexico during the post-revolutionary era excluded Mexican diasporic identities, which were created at the margins of what was conceived as the nation-state. In the context of an increasingly global and interconnected economy such identities became key players in positioning the country within the reconfiguration of geopolitical and economical vectors of power. In this sense, under the neoliberal era the Mexican government was forced to open up the narrow boundaries of belonging in order to benefit from the existence of a seizable population that belonged to the nation, whether or not this right to belong was recognized by the state.

In the Spanish case, its integration into what later would be known as the European Union, implied what Suarez Navaz (2004) calls the re-bordering of the Mediterranean. Spain's entrance into the EU involved the construction of a unified European identity that was symbolically opposed to those coming from the so-called Third World. In practice, European Citizenship was constructed by establishing common guidelines to restrict immigration from countries outside the EU and by marginalizing and prosecuting those Others who contributed to build the country in its most literal sense. In this sense, Mexican emigrants transited from being a threat to the *Mexican heaven* to be, at least discursively, a part of the imagined community. In contrast, (some) immigrants in Spain had the opposite experience.

This discussion will be followed by a general overview of the migration channels and motivations behind the relocation of a specific set of skilled migrants pioneering their way into Spain and in the context of a new approach of the Mexican government towards its extra-territorial citizens. It provides a general typology that was constructed departing from the motivations behind the movement, which in general are related to their migratory statuses: study, work, relationships, search for roots and adventure. Such typologies are closely related

to their position as middling migrants and had an impact in their home-making experiences since they determined their migratory paths and their incorporation channels.

As a way to conclude this chapter, I will introduce some of the discussions around the generalized image of Mexican migration and its impact on the specific set of migrants this work is discussing and that draws upon some of the symbolic struggles tied to the meaning of Mexicanness abroad.

As a whole, this chapter starts a discussion that will be followed throughout the work: the idea of a rooted belonging and its negotiation with the routes found in Madrid. This tension is framed within the ethos of neoliberal governmentality, which becomes particularly salient in the context of "talented" and highly-skilled extra-territorial citizens.

6.1 MEXICO: THE BORDER CROSSED US...AGAIN

As it was shown in the previous chapter, for indigenous populations access to "full Mexicaness" is only granted as long as they renounce to their languages and ethnic autonomy. Mexicans abroad and their descendants are labeled as traitors and "half-breads" (cholos, pochos and malinches) implying that somehow they are "*washed down Mexicans*" by living abroad and therefore acquiring a hyphenated identity. It can be said that historically, Mexico has treated its indigenous populations and transborder migrants as denizens and in a sense they remain excluded from the *Mexican heaven* (Fitzgerald, 2006; Fox, 2006 Gutierrez, 1999).

Emigrants in Mexico transitioned from being "traitors to heroes" in the last decade of the 20th century (Fox: 2006, 41). In the last years of the 20th century the Mexican government began the efforts to reincorporate its diaspora into the national arena and nowadays Mexicans abroad are being promoted as a "*benefit to the nation and as extraterritorial citizens*" (Smith, 2003: 9).

Thus, although the Mexican government has intermittently promoted mass migration to the U.S and migrant remittances have constituted a great portion of the national income, local

political authorities considered that Mexicans who left had "*exited the imagined national community*" (Goldring, 2002: 65).

For example, throughout the 20th century, Mexico gained good reputation as a destination for refugees from various Spanish-speaking countries. The country offered asylum and preferential naturalization rights to citizens fleeing from authoritarian regimes: in the 1940's from Spain, between 1960's and 1970's from diverse South American countries and in the early 1980's from Guatemala. In contrast, second and third generation Mexicans, who were regarded as foreigners threatening the rights of natives, did not receive the same preferential naturalization rights given to other Spanish-speaking citizens until 1974 (Fitzgerald, 2006:94).

It was in the mid 1980's that the Mexican government began to establish a relationship with its diaspora and Mexican emigrants began to gain some positive attention in their home country. This shift responded to three interrelated processes that redefined Mexican domestic and foreign policy. The regularization of nearly three million Mexicans in the U.S. by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 rendered a population that considered themselves Mexicans while having a secure migratory status in the U.S. In this sense, there was an entire population that could be used as leverage in negotiations at a domestic and foreign level.

At a domestic level, in the 1988 presidential elections, the hegemonic power of Mexico's ruling party for over 80 years (PRI) had been threatened by the support given to the opposition candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas during his campaign tours in the U.S., prompting the ruling party to re-orient its political strategy by including Mexicans abroad. At a foreign level, Mexican professionals and entrepreneurs in the U.S. were seen as leverage in the negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement in the late 1980's (Goldring, 2002: 65).

This new relationship involved a series of programs and policies that started with out-reach programs in immigrant communities in the U.S. during the 1980's, passed through the

reinstatement of Mexican nationality to Mexicans living abroad and their offspring in 1998 and were culminated by the right to vote from abroad in 2005.

Through a series of policy and program initiatives "the migrant," once regarded as a Chicano or even a pocho lost to the fatherland and entitled to no Mexican citizen rights (or at best, as a potential source of pressure on the U.S. government to improve US-Mexican relations) is now actively promoted as a benefit to the nation and an "extra-territorial citizen" (Smith, 2003 :9).

As Smith (1997) has argued, transnationalism led by the Mexican state has been key in establishing what may be relatively long-lasting transnational fields. Specific forms of state-led transnationalism vary and may include efforts to monitor and facilitate remittance transfers; policies aimed at creating incentives for investment, funding, and promotion of cultural and educational exchange programs aimed at emigrants; promotion of home-country tourism among emigrants or their descendants; public statements by political authorities about the importance of emigrants to the country; and laws permitting double nationality, dual citizenship, or both (Goldring, 2002: 64).

It has to be noted that although there are a series of constitutional reforms to accommodate Mexicans abroad into the national landscape, mainly in the form of "*the non-loss of nationality*", the Mexican constitution forbids dual nationals from holding public offices. In reality, these reforms only give Mexicans abroad property rights and more recently the right to vote in certain elections from abroad. Effectively, the regime behind these reforms entail a flexible notion of citizenship that promotes a cultural and political affiliation to Mexico through the maintenance of Mexicaness while the acquisition of a second nationality is encouraged (Goldring, 2002; Fitzgerald 2006).

The "poster boy" for this flexible notion of citizenship was Mario Molina, a Mexican-born Nobel laureate, who at the time of receiving the prize, in 1995, had lost Mexican nationality. At the time, Mexican media and political power talked about Molina as the prodigal son of

Mexico and "example for Mexican scientists". In reality, he had lost Mexican nationality since the 1970's when he became a U.S citizen, had been living outside Mexico for the past 20 years and more over, other countries had sponsored his research.

In 1998, he was one of the guests of honor at the ceremony that marked a new era in the relationship of Mexico with its diaspora. President Ernesto Zedillo, delivered a speech where he labeled the reform as an "act of justice":

If you have sustained the love and respect for this fatherland, now, more than ever, we will be side by side, working to face the same challenges and with the same opportunities (own translation, Zedillo: 4th June 1998).

Molina's Nobel prize and the fact that he was able to develop ground breaking research not because of his country but in spite of it, reignited one of the few public debates around middling forms of migration: the phenomena of the brain drain. What was the government doing in order to retain its human capital? There are a handful of programs aimed to repatriate postgraduate students and researchers from abroad and the possibility to possess a dual nationality. But in practice the Mexican government seems to be more concerned with reaping out the benefits of having "talented" extra-territorial citizens than keeping them inside the country.

6.2 SPAIN: THE RE-BORDERING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

On the other side of the Atlantic Ocean an interrelated process of re-definition of borders and belonging was at stake. Spain integrated into the European Community in 1986 as a result of an unprecedented economic growth, which was stimulated by emigrant remittances, a vibrant tourist industry and the industrialization of the Northern part of the country (Colectivo IOÉ, 2001; Suárez-Navaz, 2004).

The consolidation of the European Community in what is nowadays known as the European Union (1993), entailed the integration of economies, political institutions, legal systems and a

new form of cross border mobility, that required the elimination of the control of internal borders and an enhancement of the external borders of this "new" Europe. Thus, the full annexation of Spain into the EC implied what Suárez-Navaz (2004) has called the *"re-bordering of the Mediterranean"* referring to *"the extension of European Frontiers to include southern European countries in the mid 1980's, and to the construction of new social boundaries in the inner-land"* (22). In this sense, the "re-bordering of the Mediterranean" was triggered by a set of policies at a national and at a European level that established a legal and hierarchical distinction of the inhabitants of Spain and classified them in citizens with full rights, denizens with limited rights and undocumented immigrants who became even more vulnerable to exploitation and deportation.

Before 1985, the Spanish government showed no interest in enacting a comprehensive immigration law, but as the result of Spain's imminent entry into the EC, there was external pressure to control the immigration already present in the country and restrict immigration from countries outside the EC.

The first task, controlling immigration already present in the country, was covered by the enactment of the 1985 "Alien Law". This law is thought to be one of the toughest ones in Europe, since it increased government powers to deport foreigners under a myriad of new provisions and restricted immigrant's access to employment in the formal sector by establishing the need of a work contract and then request in different ministries for a work and then a resident permit. Under the new law, Spanish authorities were enabled to deport immigrants without resident permits or temporal visas and those engaged in whatever activities the authorities determined to be either: illegal, contrary to the public interest or socially unacceptable (Cornelius, 2000: 345).

The second task, restrict immigration from non-EU member countries, was achieved at European level through the Maastricht Treaty (1995) that paved the way for the construction of a European Citizenship by establishing common guidelines to restrict the (documented) immigration from countries outside the EU.

Thus the enactment of the 1985 "Alien Law" and the adherence to the "Maastricht Treaty" divided the already existing and recently arrived population in: Spanish, EU-Citizens, non-EU residents and "illegals" which derived in degrees of rights that went from full citizen rights (voting, residing and working) to the most vulnerable category of "undocumented immigrant".

Previous to its incorporation into the EU, Spain had been known as a country of emigration, but by the early 1980's most of the guest workers that migrated to Northern Europe in search for better life conditions during the dictatorship had returned to the country. Their return evidenced the economic upturn in Spain product of a boom in the tourist industry, the industrialization of part of the country and an overall adoption of a new capitalist rationality (Huntoon, 1998:429).

Although since the entrance of Spain into the EC, immigration had been steadily growing, the mid 1990's marks the start of the most voluminous wave of immigration the country has witnessed and it coincides with the temporal frame that this research focuses on. Aside from the dramatic increase in numbers, this last wave of immigration differs from the previous periods of immigration, which involved either return migration or European migration. The demographics of the immigrant population in Spain changed from being predominantly Western European to a diverse array of influxes from third world countries, mainly from Africa and Latin America (Cornelius,1994).

Authorities, media and population in general, started to differentiate the population under some new categories: their legal status in the country, their country of origin and their social class, which is tightly related to, among other things, their level of skill. The new categories ranged from the generally welcomed and "unproblematic" fellow European citizens, passing through the non-communitarian residents who are legally recognized but enjoy a limited set of privileges, to the infamously known as the "illegals" who are seen as problematic and as a "threat". The classifications also include an "ethno-cultural" tone, and there are the whiter Western Europeans who are living in Spain as retirees, seasonal migrants or lifestyle migrants, passing through the known and culturally affine but voluminous contingent from

Latin American countries to the North African immigrants who are seen as the ultimate Others and are target of most strict regulation.

The 1985 "Alien Law" was enacted at a time when influxes of cheap labor into Spain were needed the most. The generalized process of modernization in Spain inevitably changed its demographics, rendering a more educated population and a higher participation of women in the productive sectors of the economy. As a consequence, there were a series of voids left by the native population in both the public and the domestic sphere. Thus, cheap immigrant labor was actually needed to fill low skilled jobs in agriculture, construction and the domestic sphere. In fact, the enactment of such law did not deter the entrance of immigrant labor force into the country it just made their stay more precarious by forcing them into the submerged economy (Suárez Navaz, 1996: 22).

Throughout the last 30 years Spain has gravitated from a zero-tolerance policy that was related to marrying migration with security issues, towards a more labor-oriented migratory policy . Such change in the discourse towards seeing migration as a labor market policy tool *"aims to distinguish between the productive and unproductive elements of migration movements, turning the former into a driver of economic growth"* (Düvell, 2003: 5). Under this new rationalized approach towards immigration, unskilled and poorer immigrants still hold the narrow end of the deal. While authorities and employers state the need to attract qualified immigration, they also claim that the unskilled migration already in Spain has to be "managed" and it is framed as "temporal" and "illegal immigration" which has to be fought against.

Attracting qualified immigrants is very important for the Spanish economy in need of a change of model that enhances the development of the productive sectors with a higher added value (and that can replace the construction industry and certain services as the engine for growth). Because of this, diverse measures can be adopted, such accelerating the administrative paperwork for hiring this kind of immigrants (own translation, Círculo de Empresarios, 2007:7).

Apparently, and following some of the more seasoned immigration countries of the European Union, such as the United Kingdom, Germany or the Netherlands, Spain aims to attract skilled migration and place it at the center of their economic development strategy. Nevertheless, and as it will be shown in the following subsections, Spain is still to adapt its migratory procedures to be able to efficiently recruit and fast-track the authorizations needed in order to attract this type of migrants.

6.3 MEXICAN MIDDLE MIGRANTS IN MADRID

Most of the explanations as for why middle classes move internationally, describe a decision-making process where the accumulation of various types of capital is at stake. In a world where traditional means of "distinction", such as secondary and tertiary education, are increasingly popular, accumulating cultural capital by immersing oneself in a different setting might fit the bill. The accumulation of cultural capital may range from learning a new language or meeting different people, to enhancing future job prospects through curricula vitae that includes studies or work in a highly competitive international setting. Following this logic, most scholarly accounts on middle migration take place in known world cities such as Paris, London, New York and other recognized global cities (Scott. 2004 and 2006; Wiles, 2008; Favell, 2009). Such cities act as magnets for migrants since they offer a vibrant cultural and social life alongside with career opportunities in highly competitive sectors such as finance, information technologies and commerce.

For this group of middle migrants Madrid was simply nice, it was not as exciting as London, or intriguing as Paris or challenging as Berlin, just to name some of the alternative European destinations Mexicans dreamt of. In this sense, Madrid did not hold the mythical appeal that some of the more established "global cities" have and was in most of the cases the place where curiosity met opportunity. Why a group of middle migrants would choose such a city?

The first and most obvious possible answer is that migratory paths for middle class mobility are nowadays widely linked to a first international experience as a student. In this sense, we can find foreign students in almost any city with a relatively reputed university or language program. The second answer is that most cities are globally connected in one way or another. It is not a question of whether a city is global or not, it is more a question of how is it global and which are its transnational connections (see Çaglar and Glick Schiller, 2010). The third answer is that migration in general, and maybe this holds even more for middle classes, does not come from a pareto-optimal equation where the motivations and benefits of the movement can be easily grasped. Some movements are closely linked to lifecycle (think about retirees in the Costa del Sol), to lifestyle (they might be looking for freedom) or to family life (they fell in love!).

The following section will describe the different channels and motivations behind the migration of middle class Mexicans to Madrid. It will link the changes regarding migration in both countries, Spain and Mexico, with the motivations, expectations, opportunities and constraints that mark the experience of Mexican middling migrants in a new country. But before starting, a few notes regarding the migratory system in Spain.

6.3.1 Migratory system in Spain

It has been mentioned that the adherence to the Maastricht treaty divided the entering and existing population in Spain in four main categories: Spanish, EU citizens, non- EU residents and undocumented. Non-Spanish nationals legally entering the country fall under three broad categories: European Union Regime and General Regime (*régimen comunitario y régimen general*), and those holding temporary permits (transborder workers, students, etc). Under the European Union Regime, citizens from countries belonging to the European Union (and their relatives) enjoy the right to work, study, live and vote in certain elections. The General Regime encompasses the citizens from other countries and gives them a diverse array of rights that can range from just temporarily residing in the country without any other right, to being able to live and work indefinitely. The temporary permits encompass a wide variety of

situations, but in this context we will focus on the student visas. One important difference between both regimes (communitarian and general) and the temporary permits is that while for the first ones the time one has spent in the country under such regimes can be accounted for the acquisition of Spanish Nationality, the people holding a permit are treated as visitors independently of the time.

To enter Spain as a "skilled immigrant" and being able to be incorporated into the labor market as such, under the provisions set by the General Regime potential immigrants need to have a reason to migrate to Spain, either as workers or investors. In the case of the ones who want to work in the country, they need to be offered a contract prior to the move and it has to be validated by the national authorities. Generally, such validation of a work contract needs to fulfill various requirements: first it has to be a job position that cannot be filled neither by a Spanish nor by a European national, second, it has to pay a minimum salary set by the Ministry of Labor, and third it has to be fulfilled by a person holding the proper and validated credentials (legalized, homologated and sometimes translated diplomas). The length of time such process might take depends on the "importance" of the job position and the convergence of study plans for each profession (for example, to homologate a diploma in the health, construction or legal areas might take longer).

In the case of Students, they need to demonstrate having the means to support themselves prior to the move (in the form of private or external funds) and in the case of students also a formal admission letter by a Spanish university.

Most of the Mexicans migrated to Spain under the provisions set by the General Regime or with Student visas, and some of them eventually were able to transit to the European Union Regime. There are relatively outlying cases where people either (1) entered the country as a Spanish or European citizen, (2) went through a family reunification process through a familial connection to either a European Citizen or to someone holding a resident permit with enough money to support them during their stay in Spain, or (3) entered the country as tourists, extended their stay irregularly and later found various channels to regularize their

situation, being the most prominent one, the regularization programs in the late 90's and mid 2000's.

a. Students

Almost all the people I met had or were having a first international moving experience as a student. As Favell (2009) points out *"this simple first mechanism can then lead to further migration, via a series of different paths: additional study, seeing new professional opportunities, getting a taste for difference or foreign countries or, of course, romance "* (67).

While in a European context is obvious that international mobility of students has increased in recent years, mostly because of mobility programs like Erasmus or Socrates, students from all over the world are increasingly moving internationally as well. Until recent years, mobility for Mexican students was restricted to postgraduate students who had access to a handful of scholarship programs or privileged members of the upper middle-class.

For Mexican students, the oldest mechanism available is through the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACyT), which offers a state-sponsored scholarship program for postgraduate studies abroad. Other options include the Fulbright program and most notably, the Carolina Foundation, which is the Spanish equivalent of the CONACyT and has a scholarship program specifically targeting Latin American students. Of course such programs are more competitive than the Erasmus scheme, since they are directed towards postgraduate students and involve institutional financial responsibility.

More recently, private universities have started to offer international mobility programs for their students, and it includes students from high school to graduate degrees. In fact, in the face of an increasing competition to attract students, private universities offer international programs that allow its students to experience a semester or two abroad, as a marketing strategy to increase the profile of their alumni. Moreover, the Erasmus program has destined a budget to include third countries into the Euro-mobility scheme and some Mexican students have begun to take advantage of such novel scheme.

Migration of students from outside the European Union might require a higher economic and cultural capital than for those moving from within the Union. In the case of Mexican migration to Spain, although they are undoubtedly privileged, the movement was not as financially consuming as it might appear and the shared language facilitated the movement. Even without a scholarship, a job or financial support from their parents, many Mexican middle class students were able to get by in Spain for a few months. This happened with the aid of their savings and the resulting money of selling their cars or small businesses, until they found a part-time job or a scholarship once they were settled in. Within a year of their arrival they were usually able to financially support themselves through internships, scholarships or half-time jobs related to their fields of expertise.

I liked the program and since I had to pay for the whole thing I had to choose a cheap country. Thus, I am in Spain (María, S, IT consultant, 2 years).

When it comes to describe Spain as a cheaper European destination for Mexican middling migration, there is an after and a before marked by the entrance of the Euro in 2001. Recently arrived students tend to live in shared apartments, in general need to watch their budget and are particularly aware of the exchange rates between Mexican pesos, US dollars and Euros. In contrast, the ones that arrived when the peseta was currency in Spain paint a whole different story. They were not only able to get by, in their own words they were *"living like the sons and daughters of rich men"*. That is the case of Hugo, a lawyer who started his PhD program in 1998 with a scholarship from CONACyT and was answering a question about how his life was when he was a student.

CONACyT used to give me one thousand dollars a month and I lived in Salamanca like the son of a rich man... we lived in a two bedroom apartment with a huge terrace facing the main square, we would rent cars for the weekend and move around... hell we used to go to the supermarket and buy silly things like whipped cream, the last

detergent and expensive bottles of wine (Hugo, S, lawyer, intermittent last time 7 years).

There was another after and before for students. While before 2004 a student could change his/or her migratory status

Besides the cost of life there are other factors weighting in the decision to choose Spain as a destination to pursue higher education. Spanish universities have been targeting Latin American students, not only through the Carolina Foundation scholarship program, but also through promotional campaigns in educational fairs and agreements with their Latin American counterparts.

Moving as a student might be one of the least controversial and regulated forms of international mobility. In the particular case of Mexican Students, moving to Spain was also attractive because in most cases their diplomas were recognized by the Spanish Education Authorities and because in general, having a shared language facilitated the paperwork related to an international move of this nature.

There was a particular anecdote told by my first informant that would be repeated by different people, over the course of the fieldwork. She was an MBA student whose stay in Madrid was being paid by her parents and a part-time job in an import-export company, when I asked her why she chose Madrid she told me that *"Madrid is a coincidence in my life, I had never been here before, I didn't knew the place and I wasn't interested in knowing it"*. When I asked her about the exact logics of her relocation she told me *"I wanted to leave Mexico and I wanted to study in London, I was fed up with my job...I couldn't go to London because I made the decision at the last minute and there was trouble scheduling the IELTS"* (Paula, S, student, 9 months).

b. Workers

Although most of my informants were employed in their fields of expertise, it was hard to find people whose migration was initiated by a job offer. The ones whose movement was

triggered by work were involved in some sort of transnational endeavor that linked two or more countries, usually Spain and Mexico.

A first obvious group of transnational workers are diplomats and consulate workers embedded in a diplomatic career and in these cases the Mexican government determines the relocation and the time of stay. A post in the Mexican Embassy in Spain, or one of its Consular Offices, is a highly regarded job within the Mexican diplomatic service, since Spain is the third priority country for the Mexican government in terms of international relations, just below the US and Canada.

There are three main reasons behind the strategic relevance of Spain for the Mexican government. First, because of the historical links which bind both countries. Second, Spain is seen as "the gate to the European Union", as a partner in the brokerage of Mexican commercial agreements with other members of the Union and as a pilot experiment for Mexican producers trying to sell their products internationally and beyond the North American Free Trade Agreement. Third, Spain is seen as an alternative destination for Mexican workers and since 1990 both governments have worked towards a program for temporary workers that up to this date has not been made permanent.

The search for tighter economic links between Spain and Mexico has opened up the labor market for a new "breed" of middling migrants who work as brokers between Mexican businesses and the Spanish market. Most notably, there is the example of the "business accelerators" that can be managed by private citizens or sponsored by the Mexican government. These business accelerators employ Mexican lawyers, accountants and business administrators who know the inner works of Mexican and Spanish markets and are able to "land" Mexican businesses in Spain, by helping them with the paperwork needed to open a branch, explore the market in Spain and more importantly work as "translators" between the particular ways of making business across both sides of the Atlantic ocean. The majority of these "brokers" had previous experience in Spain, either as students or workers in local companies. The fewer "brokers" that came directly from Mexico were formerly working in big transnational companies settled in Mexico or in local business accelerators and tended to

be either young professionals without family attachments or older senior officers that no longer had young offspring.

The reason behind the small numbers of brokers transferred directly from Mexico to Spain is that the migratory process can be time-consuming and complicated. Since most of these business accelerators are pilot projects, the logistics behind moving mid-ranked personnel from one country to another are yet to be solved in an efficient manner. This was the case of Mariana, who was one of the pioneer workers in a business accelerator sponsored by the Mexican government,

I started the immigration procedure through the accelerator and we made an agreement with the Labor Ministry to speed the process because the visa for the director of the program took almost a year. For mine it took eight months but just because they inflated my position within the organization in order to speed up the process. They state me as a director of business development but in reality I am just a business manager (Mariana, W, Business Manager, 3 years).

This is a clear example of how migratory laws in Spain have yet to adapt to growing numbers⁹ of middling workers on demand. While there are clear and somewhat efficient procedures to move higher-end transnational workers and programs for temporary unskilled workers, the logistics of moving mid-ranked workers outside a corporate structure are still blurry and time-consuming, unless moving within specific niches.

While the case of Mariana depicts how job positions in Spain are inflated in order to speed-up the migratory process, in some cases the opposite strategy is also used by companies in need of middling workers. That was the case of Javier, a reputed architect who is working as a link between the Mexican and Spanish branches of a bi-national architectural firm. He moved to Madrid to coordinate joint construction projects in both sides of the Atlantic, but since he was urgently needed in Spain to supervise the construction of various high-end buildings in

I am aware that this statement, in the face of the economic crisis of 2008 is increasingly inaccurate.

Madrid, they had to bypass the requirements needed in order for him to work as an architect in Spain.

Because of my profession I had to homologate my diploma, write a plea letter, go through a process where the Spanish government was sure that there was neither a Spanish nor a European architect fit for the position... so it was rather time-consuming because I had to do a series of exams to get my diploma homologated to work in Spain. The lawyers told me that it was easier and faster to get a visa as a domestic worker... so I am officially working as the nanny of one of the Spanish architects. (Javier, W, architect, 5 years)

Although bypassing the migratory requirements for work permits might seem shady in the best case scenario and illegal in the worst, sometimes it is the only way to fill in the middling positions available in the Spanish labor market. Sometimes going through the official channels implies a lost opportunity for both, the middling migrant and its potential employer. There is another example. When Amalia was finishing postdoctoral position in the United Kingdom she was offered a teaching position in one of the biggest universities in Madrid. Her diplomas were already homologated since she had a Spanish PhD and she was clearly one of the few people fit for a position that required specific knowledge to do research in cognitive neuropsychology. In a sense, the most time-consuming requirements for getting her job contract validated by the Spanish immigration authorities were already fulfilled and it seemed this was working on her behalf. Even with half of the process already done by the time she applied for a work visa, the process was so slow that in the mean time she was offered a second position in the United Kingdom and was already working there when her permit to work in Spain was issued.

Of course migrating to Spain as a professional is not always as complicated as the last experiences describe. Migration of certain types of professionals is easier because there are bi or multilateral agreements that are designed to attract certain types of professionals needed to

fill clear gaps in the national labor market or that are linked to a type of job that is non-threatening for the rather fragile Spanish labor market. A clear example of this are journalists working for foreign news outlets, whose accreditation process does not depend on the already heavy loaded Ministry of Immigration or Labor but is dependent directly on the approval of the Moncloa (the head of state).

c. Dual Nationals

According to official data more than fifty percent of the Mexicans residing in Spain fall under the European Union Regime (régimen comunitario) meaning that they hold a dual nationality, Mexican and from other country of the European Union (Ministerio del Interior, 2002). This was only possible until 1998, when the Mexican government made a series of constitutional reforms to allow dual nationality. Some of them obtained a European nationality through marriage or a long stay in the country and some others are the grandsons and granddaughters of Spanish immigrants, particularly of those who fled Spain during the Civil War.

Even though many Mexicans in Spain are directly related to either refugees from the Spanish Civil War or to people who moved prior to the war, only few of them had a Spanish citizenship prior to moving to the country. This was either because were not interested in obtaining the Spanish citizenship or because they were having difficulties tracing back feasible documentation of their relatives being Spanish citizens.

Some of them grew up embedded in the Spanish Diaspora that settled in Mexico and they were deeply familiarized with the "frozen" image of Spain their grandparents brought into exile. Some of the exiles kept their Spanish citizenship and were able to pass it directly to their descendents while the relatives of the ones who lost their nationality during the war, were able to claim it back through the Law for the Historic Memory (Ley de la Memoria Histórica). This law is an overarching plan implemented by the Spanish Socialist Party under pressure from the victims of the war on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean that aims to recognize and restore some of the damage inflicted to the losing side of the war.

In these cases, the idea of roots and blood ties with the country of their ancestors played a major role in choosing to relocate to Spain either to study, work or try their luck. That was the case of Marco, who did his bachelors degree in the US but spent a year as an exchange student in Madrid to later relocate as a full time resident.

I idealized Spain, of course my family had something to do with it, but also because of the myth of the blood ties, because your grandfather is Spanish and you kind of believe in the blood ties... (Marco, DN, journalist, 4 years)

Of course, the image of Spain they grew up with hardly coincided with their actual daily lives in the country,

My granddad was Spanish and I think my dad almost feels more Spanish than Mexican... also, when I was growing up we used to go to the Asturian Country Club and you go there and it is like they are stuck in time, they act more Spanish than the Spanish, they have really thick accents and they play pétanque, you see these really old guys yelling at each other and saying "let's play pétanque!" PÉ TAN QUE! (Fernando, DN, publicist, 5 years)

For the ones who did not know about their relatives' lives prior to the war, Spain was just another place to be and acquiring the nationality just meant another passport to travel around the world and the right to live and work somewhere else. It has been stated that individuals from a second and third generation of immigrant families tend to have a rather ambiguous relationship with the home-country of their relatives. Studies on diaspora, exile and second generation immigrants have found out that *"Whether individuals ultimately forge or maintain some kind of transnational connection, at some point in their lives, largely depends on the extent to which they were brought up in transnational spaces"* (Abelman, 2002:6). According to the experiences of some of the Mexican- Spanish dual nationals, it can be said that adding

to this, having a dual nationality and the possibility of forming attachments to other countries through notions of roots and blood, can also be triggered by a feeling of discontent in the countries where they were born and raised.

Although this study focuses primarily on a younger generation of Mexican middling migrants, I interviewed Remedios, the daughter of a couple of Spanish exiles in Mexico, who has been working on promoting and strengthening the links between both countries as part of the plan to highlight the contributions of the Spanish exiles into the Mexican cultural and scientific landscape. She spoke about the way in which she saw the "return" of her offspring to Spain and the possible underlying motivations behind it.

I think they are escaping... I don't know if they are searching for a long lost freedom, we became the asphalt meat of that city (Mexico City). I don't know, I think they are escaping from a society that is not better or any worse in any sense it's just more insecure...(Remedios, DN, cultural broker, 19 years)

In a sense, many of the younger Mexicans in Spain, independently of their migratory status, were escaping from an increasingly violent and insecure situation in Mexico, but the novelty here, is that dual nationals had a European Passport as an exit strategy.

d. Partners

There was an important number of people either migrating because of their partner's jobs or relocating because their partners were Spanish. Although the main reason behind the relocation was love and romance, the processes of migration and the experience of the movement varied widely depending on the nationality of the partner.

While the prototypical trailing partner tends to be the wife of a corporate transferee and experiences career stagnation because of the conditions under which visas for trailing partners are granted (see Yeoh and Khoo, 1998; Mendoza and Ortiz, 2007), the people that relocated

to Spain because they fell in love with a local, experienced a more unstructured migratory process that was both, more complicated but also less constricting.

The bi-national couples met over the Internet, while travelling around, as exchange students or through friends of friends and in general went through a phase that was marked by a sense of uncertainty and temporality. For many of them, going through the route of marriage and then family re-grouping was not an option. In some cases it was because of the unstable nature of a long distance relationship and in others because in certain circles it was stigmatized.

Thus, although the main reason behind the relocation was love, many of them entered Spain either as students or tourists, and took their time until they decided what kind of relationship they wanted. Although this type of migration was highly gendered, and the overwhelming majority of the people who moved because of a relationship were women, the process of choosing Spain, and more concretely Madrid as the place to live as a couple was hugely related to the quality of life and to the wide range of possibilities that possessing a European residency or nationality opened up for the couple.

Leaving group stigma aside, getting married and then going through a family re-unification process was in no sense an easy task. Although in the cases where the Mexican partner was already living in Spain with a temporary visa, marrying a local accelerated the process of granting a residency, the process of family re-unification was time consuming and could affect the relationship. In most cases there were two options, either to get married and then wait between 6 months and one year in Mexico to get the marriage validated by the Spanish government or to get stuck in a migratory limbo in Spain until the proper paperwork came through.

e. Adventurers

The last group of middling Mexicans was a rare breed that was usually found working at restaurants, cafés and bars or doing freelance jobs here and there. They had two things in common, first, they were the artistic types that were interested in all sorts of creative

professions and second, they entered the country as tourists and most of the times went through long periods of time without legal documents to reside in Spain. Coincidentally, two different researches by Scott (2006) and O'Reilly and Benson (2009) on British middling migrants show that these bohemian types of migrants have little interest in having an established career path.

Although they had a middle class status in Mexico where they could have a mid-income job, this group of highly creative people went to Spain attracted by the cultural scene and lifestyle and just needed enough money to get by and dedicate most of their time to a generally underpaid and unstable job in their fields.

For some of them it was not only their first experience abroad, but also the first time they were confronted to some sort of economic need. Sofia first moved to Oxford to learn English while she pondered whether or not she wanted to start film-school in Madrid. Soon after arriving into Oxford she realized that her time in the UK was going to be expensive and that she needed to supplement the money her parents were sending. She got a job as an *au-pair* for a British family and narrated her first encounter with actual manual labor.

Suddenly Mrs. Weber told me she wanted me to iron some shirts and I was literally in a catatonic state, I thought I had to play with a couple of kids and that was it, but then she asked me to iron the shirts and I thought it was surreal (Sofia, A, filmmaker, intermittent last time 2 years).

The shock was such that she felt the need to call her parents and ask for advice. While her Mexican mother found it hilarious and thought it was a valuable teaching moment, her Brazilian father hung up the phone after stating how disappointed he was. After a short stint as an *au-pair* in Oxford, Sofia decided she wanted to move to Madrid to spend her last "teenage years, living like a poet, going to the bars, talking about life and love... talking about Joaquin Sabina, being a bohemian".

What seemed to attract them to Spain, and more specifically to Madrid, was the idea of the "Madrilean grove scene" (la movida madrileña). This was a contra-cultural movement that started in Madrid after the death of Franco and the consequent democratization of Spain in the late seventies and reached its peak in the mid eighties (Revista de Estudios de Juventud, 2004). Although all of them arrived in Madrid when this contra-cultural movement had already reached its peak and was long gone, many of them grew up with the imagery of a progressive Spanish society with a thriving cultural scene. In Benson and O'Riley's words the *"drive towards a better way of life, the meaningfulness and values ascribed to particular places, but also the potential for self-realization that is embedded within the notion of spatial mobility"* (2009: 3).

Antonio, nowadays a restaurant manager, arrived in 1995 following a friend who told him about life in Madrid. At 22 years old, he was already a small-business owner that was bored with life in Mexico, so he decided to sell his upscale barbershop and went to Madrid to try his luck. What he experienced was a world filled with music, drugs and young people trying to have fun. After a period of trial and error where he worked as a music promoter, owned a second-hand clothing shop and sold crafts, he finally found a niche in a Mexican Restaurant owned by a group of friends, where he designs and crafts Mexican fusion cuisine and organizes catering events.

Spain was living through the last wave of freedom, it was funny because when I came they were exactly the way in which we saw the contemporary Spanish from afar a little bit rocker, a little bit clueless, nice... it had something special... when I arrived you could have a really nice life as a waiter, now sixteen years have passed by and a waiter still has the same wages... (Antonio, A, restaurant-manager/entrepreneur, 16 years)

In terms of Mexican migration to Spain and because of their legal status when they entered the country, they were one of the undoubted beneficiaries of a series of amnesties for

undocumented immigration in Spain . Carlos, a performing artist with a promising career in local plays in Mexico, went to Barcelona to scout the cultural scene. Unable to learn Catalan, he shortly left the city and moved to Madrid where he works as a waiter and during his free time tours with a group of young Mexican Pre-Hispanic dancers.

The first few years I really did not give a shit about the papers thing, later on I realized that there were certain doors I couldn't open because of my undocumented situation, and I realized that I was not going back to Mexico, that I was still here and that I had to do something about the papers, so there was the change from Aznar to Zapatero and there was a big amnesty for undocumented immigrants, I think they regularized like six thousand of us... so I've been legal since Zapatero started... (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years).

What is outstanding about this group of middling migrants is that what started as a gap-year to broaden their horizons, ended up to be a transformative experience that pushed them out of a comfortable middle class status in their country of origin and confronted them with a long-term and unplanned experience in country that was going through a period of great transformation. In a sense they are the clearest example of how migration is not always a zero-sum game where the gains and losses of the movement can be easily weighted in.

6.4 BUT, ARE YOU AN IMMIGRANT?

It was mentioned at the beginning of the work that my informants did not respond well to the label "immigrant". This because middling migrants are under the impression that their cultural, social and economic capitals, sets them in a whole different category than what the popular image of immigrant depicts. For this group of young Mexicans being an immigrant was associated with being the unwanted Other, where questions of cultural affinity, ethnicity

and social class were at stake. When rejecting the label "immigrant" they were reacting against the idea of migration that was shaped in Mexico, Spain and the U.S.

As a byproduct of an increasingly mobile population and its regulation there is a *"split between the state-imposed identity and the personal identity"* (Ong, 1999: 2). Although, citizen and immigrant, are both official categories that determine who belongs and who does not, transnationalism entails different ways of being and belonging that are not confined to what the authorities of national-state sanction. In this sense, everyday life in a transnational setting posts *"new sets of categories of identity that are chosen or ascribed to or chosen by individuals or groups"* (Glick-Schiller and Levitt, 2004).

Transmigrants do not only blur the boundaries between countries by engaging in everyday lives, institutions and people across borders, but also the sharp lines that seem to divide citizens and immigrants. In this sense when people talk about themselves they identify with one or another group, they are accepting or reacting against some external identification of the dominant social group. The various identities are not a simple label that describe individuals but frequently are a statement of their position and social power in the face of members of another group. Thus identity, particularly in a transnational setting, is an ongoing formation and it is configured by personal experiences and interactions, and it is linked to the intersection of various discourses.

In this sense, and as it was sketched in the previous chapter, the ability of migrants and other international movers to *"manipulate global schemes of cultural difference, racial hierarchy and citizenship"* (Carrutgers, 2002: 424) depends on their access to a number of symbolic and material resources that can range from the education they have, to the languages they speak and where they speak them, to their ability to "pass" as a local, among others (Ong, 1999: 112).

In this case, being and, most importantly, feeling like an immigrant was associated with a certain performance and underlying motivations more than solely a legal status granted by the state. Not feeling like an immigrant, rested in a web of rather complicated symbolic meanings and material realities. But in general, there was this overarching feeling of not fitting the pre-

conceived notions of what an immigrant in general was, but more specifically what being Mexican immigrant entailed. In this sense they continuously highlighted the differences between them and a more known "image" of Mexican migrants. It was not only the ideas that they learnt in Mexico or encountered in Europe which determined their personal stance towards the label "immigrant" that mattered, but also, the ideas and prejudices steaming from U.S-American society in general.

The work by Douglas Massey (2009) "Racial Formation in Theory and Practice: The Case of Mexicans in the United States" gives a compelling analysis of the changes in the perception of Mexican migration in the U.S. since the end of the Mexico-U.S. war in 1848 until nowadays, and states that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans have gone through a downwards spiral in the public perception, having transited from a middle position within the socioeconomic hierarchy to the bottom (12). Massey bases his analysis on a quadrant formulated departing from Lee and Friske's *"stereotype content model"* (2002). In this model the perceptions of different social groups are matched to a quadrant produced by the intersection between perceptions of "warmth" and "competence". Mexican immigrants are placed in the last quadrant, where warmth and competence are the lowest and they share this space in the perception of the North American public with the most socially stigmatized out-groups such as *"drug dealers, welfare cheats, sex offenders, derelicts and bums"* (Massey, 2006). As the work of Massey explains, Mexican immigrants in the U.S. suffer from stigmatization via policy-making, media outlets and the everyday discourse. The case for Mexican migration into Spain presents a different scenario.

Up to this point Spain is offering a rather clean slate for Mexican migration since its numbers are still small and there is an overall sense of cultural proximity between Spanish and Mexicans, which creates an image of familiarity. Nonetheless, with the endemic and drug-related violence in Mexico and the heightened fear in Spain towards the economic crisis that erupted in 2008, the scenario of the position of Mexican migration in the Spanish society is likely to change.

In this context, the Mexican government and middling migrants are in the midst of a symbolic

struggle over the meanings attached to Mexicans, and more exactly the portrayal of Mexicans abroad. The following vignette provides an example of such symbolic struggle.

The tale of Burger King and the short Mexican in Spain



www.elpaís.com

On mid April 2009 Burger King, a U.S fast-food chain, launched a new product in Spain and the United Kingdom. It was a "Texican" burger that, among other things, included beans, Cajun sauce and cheddar cheese.

A campaign promoting the hamburger began in Spain and posters were placed in the main urban centers of the country and there was a television advertisement that was ready to be broadcasted. At the center of the print campaign and over the banner "*Brought together by destiny*" were and a tall and blonde man wearing a cowboy costume and a short and fat man wearing a "luchador" mask and Mexican flag as a poncho.

Shortly after the official launch of the print campaign, Mexican Ambassador in Spain Jorge Zermeno, followed by high-ranking officials within the Mexican Foreign Affairs Ministry and the national media, spoke against the campaign in outrage and demanded for its removal. Although the backlash for the campaign was mainly concentrated in Mexico, several Spanish and British newspapers reported the short-lived incident. For example, El País, one of the major Spanish newspapers reported the incident under the headline:

Mexico declares itself offended by Burger King: Mexican Ambassador in Spain said that a commercial announcement by the chain denigrates the image of his country and makes an inappropriate use of the national flag. (El País, 14.04.09).

Within the next day the same newspaper announced that Burger King Spain was withdrawing the publicity in spite of the fact that the campaign fulfilled all the legal parameters in Spain and the UK.

The T.V advertising, that was broadcasted only for a few days but went viral on the Internet shortly after the incident, provided a fuller picture of the contents and message of the campaign. The T.V add narrated the story of two roommates, the "luchador" and the cowboy, who apparently got along pretty well and helped each other in their various domestic chores. In a voice off, the narrator pointed out: *"Brought together by destiny. People said it'd never work, but somehow one plus one makes three. The Texican whooper: the taste of Texas with a little spicy Mexican. To understand it, you must try it".*

At that time, I was living in Spain and although I do not remember noticing neither the posters nor the T.V commercials before the announcement OF the Ambassador, I do remember discussing the meaning of the campaign and the response of Mexican authorities with several of my Mexican friends afterwards. The only consensus we reached was that the campaign depicted Mexicans as short and fat and U.S-Americans as tall and blonde.

About a year after the "burger" incident I interviewed the Mexican Consul in Madrid to obtain a general grasp of the Mexican population in Spain and the kind of diplomatic and consular work the Mexican government was doing in Spain. After describing the Mexican community in Spain as middle class and generally unproblematic and stating that the bulk of the work they had to do was focused on issuing passports and helping Mexican tourists who were victims of petty robberies and missing of documents, we proceeded to talk about the way in which the Embassy was trying to manage the image of Mexico in Spain.

The Consul, who at the time of the interview had only been in Spain for two years, remembered two specific incidents regarding media and image managing. The first one had to

do with the spread of the A/H1N1 or swine flu epidemic, on April 2009. Due to the fact that epidemic outbreak generated in Mexico, the Embassy had work with the Spanish government and media alike to stop the disease from spreading and prevent discrimination against Mexican tourists and residents in Spain, with actions along the line of preventing the media from labeling the disease "the Mexican flu".

The second incident, occurring also on April 2009 was precisely the one regarding the Burger King campaign. The Consul pointed out that the efforts of the Ambassador to "clean" the image of the country were well received by the Mexican Community in Spain.

Well, the thing with the hamburgers, the Ambassador stepped up and very correctly... (there were) phone calls and letters supporting (the Ambassador) saying "That's ok", they left it on the mailbox. There was a huge effort within the Ministry, and every time that there is something like that, the Attaché comes and corrects it and that is one of the most relevant things concerning the media. (Mexican Consul in Madrid)

I did some internet-ethnography, by reading the comments section in the online versions of newspaper pieces on the subject and in the YouTube videos where the T.V commercial was uploaded. I was left with the impression that the opinions on the matter, just as it happened with my friends, were pretty divided. The opinions of commentators claiming to be Mexicans, Mexicans in Spain and Mexican-Americans mainly, described the T.V add as: funny, racist, mean, ignorant, making them hungry or just a T.V add that was relying on stereotypes just as all T.V adds do. Some of the general comments pointed out that the use of the Mexican flag for commercial purposes was illegal in Mexico, that not all Mexicans were fat and short, while some more argued that the image of the "luchador" was a huge part of Mexican pop-culture and that small "luchadores" enjoyed great popularity in Mexico.¹⁰

Don't' you think they were over reacting?

¹⁰ Accessed on March 25, 2011, 11.30 A.M:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nYliwufg2V0>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwpNQWrD8PY>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00zG0t5UM3Q>

I agree with it because I think that these small stereotypes become big stereotypes. There were people that misunderstood the anger and they said it was because they used the flag, but no, the anger (was) because of the caricature, it was a cowboy and the other one (was) a kind of under-aged (person) held by his hand, and there are some implications that stay in the subconscious and those caricatures become truths in the subconscious (Mexican Consul in Madrid)

Somehow it seemed that the main problem was the way in which Mexicans were portrayed: short, fat and overall, "folkloric". In any case, Ambassador Zermeño embodied the voice of the "Mexicans" and the event seemed to be a part of a campaign launched by the Mexican government to manage the image of the country abroad.

Thus, the field where the struggle over the meanings and symbols attached to "Mexicaness" was threefold. On the one hand Burger King's advertizing was trying to capitalize on the stereotyped image of Mexicans in the U.S and while the ads were directed towards a European public, they caught the attention of Mexican Diplomats and citizens in Spain. What kind of Mexican they wanted depicted in the media? Mexicans here, someone told me off-record, are predominantly middle class, young and educated: that kind of Mexicans.

7. CHANNELS OF INCORPORATION

In the following chapter, I will sketch some of the main forms of incorporation of Mexican middling migrants into the city's labor market. From now on, it becomes particularly important to outline the fact that the experiences of Mexicans in Spain are filtered and greatly determined by the Spanish locality in which they reside. After all, it has been stated time and again that even though places are open and interconnected, in each place there is a particular combination of relations and practices that make the place unique. My informants arrived in Madrid at a time when the city was going through a process of great transformation.

The city had entered in a global competition to attract capital in varied forms. In the logics of capitalist accumulation States have redrawn their roles in many areas. The neoliberal project, does not only entail the reformulation of the relationship between citizens and governments, but it has also has implied a change in the relationships between the global, the national and the local. There has been a process of what geographers call re-scaling. As national governments re-draw their role in a host of economic and social issues, the relationship between the scales changes. In the neoliberal context, and to varying degrees, cities are seen as the new place for the territorialization of capital in the form of infrastructure and attraction of global capital.

Such project entails the construction of immobile infrastructure, such transportation systems, energy supplies and communication networks. Thus, to varying degrees, cities are the places that channel and pin down the "free" flow of capital, commodities, information and people through geographical space. It is the immobile infrastructures in cities that enable this expansion and transit to different geographical locations (Brenner, 1999: 435, Amin and Graham, 1997:413).

The bulk of the studies on the link between human mobility and urban re-structuring are focused on migrants as the source of labor force maintaining these cities, but immigrant active contribution into this restructuring and positioning of cities into a global scale has been neglected. In this sense, Glick Schiller and Caglar (2011) post two important questions:

Which are the roles migrants play in the positioning of their new cities? Which is their relationship with both, sending and receiving societies?

In the following lines I will answer those questions in the context of Mexican middling migration to Madrid. In order to do so, I will provide a brief account of the changes Madrid has experienced over the last two decades. Then I will provide an overview of the main paths and strategies of incorporation for middling migration. I will ground the discussion by describing three different paths of incorporation that highlight the way in which some middling migrants are directly contributing to the re-structuration and positioning of Madrid. This contribution is made from a middling position not only within the class structure but also as intermediaries between the economic, human and cultural fluxes between both places.

7.1 ¡MADRID!™

London, Paris and New York were mentioned as the places my informants dreamt of when they first started thinking about moving internationally. It comes as no surprise, since all of these cities are magnets for the highly skilled since they constitute the central nodes of operation of late capitalism (see work by Sassen and Friedmann). Madrid, as it has been mentioned before, was the place where curiosity met opportunity.

Once described by the New York Times travel section as *"POOR Madrid. Stuck in the middle of Spain, the city has long been perceived as the provincial, sleepy sister to Barcelona"*¹¹ the capital city of Spain has been through a process of re-structuring and rebranding that intends to position the city as a global interconnected capital.

Barcelona had a breakthrough into the global arena during the Olympic Games of 1992. It went through a process of transformation that helped the city to rebrand itself as a cosmopolitan and creative city. Barcelona attracted tourists and investors from all corners of the planet and rebranded itself as a city that had it all (beach, culture and business-oriented infrastructures). Madrid, struggled to get rid of the image of the city that hosted the

¹¹ New York Times- Sarah Wildman 36 hours in Madrid 28/01/2008
<http://travel.nytimes.com/2007/01/28/travel/28hours.html?8dpc>

bureaucratic powers of the country and the place where business were closed, but that in the end was a little bit backwards and a little bit uninteresting (Luna-García, 2003:318).

The work to reposition Madrid was particularly visible between the incorporation of Spain into the European Union in 1994 and the start of the global financial crisis in 2008. The city, started to attract multinational companies, got involved in a serious process of construction of infrastructure and begun to attract people from outside Spain to participate in this process of re-structuring in varying degrees and through different channels.

During the 1990's several Spanish state-held companies were privatized: from banks to electricity, from oil to telecommunications. Along with this process of privatization, Spain adopted the Euro, a strong currency with a stable exchange rate that facilitated financial transactions at a global level. Of course, during this period other countries were going through a process of privatization. Spanish corporations benefited from a series of policies established by the International Monetary Fund in Latin America and started a process of expansion throughout the entire sub-continent¹²(Rodríguez-López, 2007: 51).

A great portion of these fluxes became territorialized in Madrid. By 2006, the city hosted the corporate headquarters of seven out of the nine Spanish corporations that are included in Forbes' Global 500 list. And nowadays the Madrilean stock market is only behind London, Paris and Frankfurt, this because of the trading volume with Latin American countries (Rodríguez-López, 2007: 35).

In terms of infrastructure the face of the city changed completely. Just to give some examples: metro system went from having 120 km in 1995 to 322 km by 2006 (metromadrid.com) and because of the extension of Barajas airport in 2006, 30% of the flights between Europe and Latin America nowadays land in the city (promomadrid.com). Some of my informants recalled this process of transformation. They talked about the construction of apartment buildings, public squares and transportation systems.

¹² This process was described in the section "From Spain to Mexico" in the chapter called "Context of the study".

I think the city lost a bit of its identity, they started rebuilding the whole city and it just grew immensely. It is true that there were some places that were falling apart, like Chueca. That neighborhood had a free flow of heroine: dealers, burners and syringes just floating. It was filled with dying junkies, and it think that was the product of a social policy based on heroine. They were just waiting for them to die. Governments can also be sons of bitches, You know? (Antonio, A, entrepreneur, 16 years).

Because of this process of re-structuring the demographic make-up of the city also changed radically. In the late 1990's only 2% of the city's population was foreign but due to a strong influx of immigration, by 2007 foreigners constituted 16% of the city's population. Nowadays, there are around a million foreigners living in Madrid and they represent around 20% of the overall foreign population in the country (PMH).

(The immigration procedures) changed greatly. When I started in 2004 it used to take longer because there so many applications but they would authorize almost all. Nowadays it is faster but it is easier to get rejected (Hugo, S, lawyer, intermittent last time 7 years).

These migratory influxes were responding to an increased demand of workers. Giménez and Crespo (2003) indicate that the majority of foreigners in the city are performing mainly unskilled jobs. As it has been mentioned before, as a consequence of the enormous changes the country has experienced, Spanish are more educated and women are increasingly incorporating into the labor market. In such scenario the locals are employed as skilled workers, while immigrants are filling in the voids. As a consequence, the local labor market has a *funnel effect* that takes a heterogeneous variety of immigrant backgrounds and places them into a few niches of incorporation: unskilled jobs in the service industry, domestic and

construction workers. In general, immigrants in the city experience a downward mobility in terms of social and professional prestige (cf. Giménez and Crespo, 2003:100-107).

7.1.1 Paths of incorporation

As it has been shown, the logics behind the relocation of Mexican middling migrants to Madrid, was rarely because of career advancement and the city attracted them because of a myriad of reasons. While some Mexicans in Madrid were following a career path set up by transnational companies, the bulk of them had to find channels of incorporation by themselves, and these paths were generally marked by a transition from being students to become working professionals.

These transitions were marked by a number of strategies to avoid the *funnel effect* described by Giménez and Crespo. In this sense, it is important to distinguish two kinds of mobility: economic and social. While some jobs in the city might convey economic advantages, this monetary gain does not imply social prestige (cf Giménez and Crespo, 2003:155). In the case of Mexican middling migrants, the social prestige related to the ability to develop professionally outweighed the (possible) economic gain.

Obtaining work permits was the first barrier for incorporation, particularly for students but also for partners and adventurers. This tended to trigger the return to Mexico or the migration to another country where they could find more suitable niches of incorporation. A second barrier, independently of the migration channel, was that the bulk of the job offers were coming from small and medium sized organizations where their potential of growing within the structure was rapidly reached.

Working in one of these organizations was a good starting point because it provided the possibility to change their migratory status. But it also familiarized them with the ethics and the inner workings of their area of expertise in a different context. Nonetheless, after a while the learning process stopped and the daily tasks became tedious or they simply were unable to keep on working there.

The ways to avoid career stagnation were either going back to Mexico, moving elsewhere or trying to find different paths in Madrid. Some found jobs in transnational firms, but this became increasingly difficult after the financial crisis of 2008. Some others, found jobs in Mexican-based organizations: the Embassy, Consulate or some office ran by Mexican provincial governments. Having such jobs required a particular kind of social capital that most of them did not possess. Another option was starting personal projects that involved using their diverse array of capitals in order to carve a niche of incorporation instead of following a path dictated by an organization. In this sense, there were an important number of Mexicans involved in personal projects to fulfill their career expectations.

Various studies on the way in which immigrant influxes into Spain have helped to re-structure its main cities, indicate that what has happened is a revitalization of traditional small commerce (Giménez, 2000; Solé and Perella; 2005). This studies frame such initiatives as *ethnic entrepreneurship*. They focus on the immigrant businesses that populate urban areas of the country, which tend to be located in ethnic neighborhoods and they cater a mainly immigrant public. Calvacanti (2007) points out that there are is a wider spectrum of immigrant entrepreneurship, particularly those from Latin America. He gives a classification based on the activity of such initiatives: *Associative spaces* (religious, governmental, social and cultural); *commercial* (restaurants, bars, hair salons, etc); *professional* (health, law, publicity, art,etc); and *mass media* (radio, newspapers, press, etc) (cf. 183).

I would like to introduce another dimension to immigrant entrepreneurship that is linked to the idea of the middling migrant but that goes beyond their middle class position. As Smith argues (2005), middling transnationalism refers to the practices of middle class actors embedded in transnational settings, but it also refers to a position of what I call "brokerage". *Brokers* are those transnational actors who work as mediators. Sometimes this mediation happens between those "from above" and "those from below", but it can also include mediating between those "from here" and "from there". In this sense, some immigrant entrepreneurship, that can be ethnic, religious, commercial, professional or related to mass media, involves a process of mediation or brokerage at a transnational level (cf. Smith, 2005).

In the following section, I will sketch some of the ways in which the intersection between the roots in Mexico and the routes found in Madrid, were manipulated in order to reap some benefits from their middling position, not only within the class structure in both countries, but also as mediators of the migratory, economic and cultural fluxes between Mexico and Spain. The sketches are presented as three small case studies in which I highlight some of the strategies of incorporation into the rather tight and changing Madrilean labor market, particularly in the face of the economic crisis of 2008. In varying degrees, all cases involved some level of brokerage but the first one represents a prototypical example of this.

The first case, *Brokers*, describes how the increasing economic and human exchanges between Mexico and Spain are opening windows of opportunity for those Mexicans who know how to "work the system" in both countries, and take advantage of their transnational connections. In this case, it becomes clear how building transnational links between two states can derive in economic, social and political profit.

The second case, *Builders*, is an example of the flexibility required in order to incorporate into the local labor market and take advantage of the opportunities that schemes of human mobility and regional development in the receiving society. This first case is perhaps the most representative of those Mexicans living in Madrid because it involved a flexible disposition around recognition (legal and professional), expectations and mobility in order to adapt to the changing dynamics of a global labor market.

The third example, *Dancers*, shows how the symbolic capital changes within a transnational field. This case depicts the case of a performing artist, who instead of following the image of the "modern" Mexico decided to go straight back to the "roots". While possessing certain cultural capital in Mexico opened up doors for the specific person in this case, movement to a different setting implied that the capital was not easily transferred and he had to take advantage of other aspects of his identity in order to find a niche to develop professionally.

a. Brokers

With an increasing economic exchange between both countries, and the growing numbers of Mexican businesses identifying Madrid as the gate to Europe in terms of commerce, there is an increasing need for human capital that is able to work as a bridge between both countries, which have particular legal and economic frameworks and very different ways of making business. The case of Brokers depicts the experiences of those Mexican middling migrants who are taking advantage of the constant exchange between Mexico and Spain.

Hugo is a lawyer who in 1998 went to Salamanca to do a PhD in criminal law, because his dream was to be "*the best defense attorney in the Mexico*". He fell in love with one of his Spanish classmates and after finishing with the course workload of their graduate degree, he moved to Vienna to work as an intern for the UN as he was writing his dissertation. His dream of becoming an attorney in Mexico changed and he had to look for a job in Spain, anywhere in Spain.

Almost eleven years after he arrived into Spain I interviewed him at his office in Madrid, where he is one of the senior associates of the first binational law firm that works as a link between Mexican and Spanish entrepreneurs.

When I came back in January 2004 with my finished thesis, I start knocking doors because I needed to survive... I started sending CV's to law firms in (Salamanca), Madrid, Barcelona, Sevilla and Valladolid, the five big cities in the country and I was asking for an opportunity to develop an area dedicated to Mexico. Finally I met a lawyer focused on the relationship between Spain and the U.S and she really liked my project. They let me develop the area without a steady salary, but I could keep a percentage of the earnings and could use image of the law firm...basically they let me use their stationary and put the name of the firm in my presentation card rejected (Hugo, S, lawyer, intermittent last time 7 years).

For over three years he worked for this Spanish firm without a contract, but being able to land a steady flow of clients who were trying to set up a business in Spain. In 2007, because his name started to be known among Mexican entrepreneurs and government representatives, he was able to open a new firm with a couple of Mexican lawyers.

As the time passed by, they started to realize that their clients needed more than just legal paperwork in order to settle their businesses and sometimes even relocating their entire families. There were several aspects of landing a Mexican business in Spain that no one was contemplating: paying taxes, dealing with the customs agency, finding prospective clients, and advising them on how to close a business deal with their Spanish counterparts. They expanded the firm, and started offering a wide variety of services to fulfill the needs of their clients.

The logic behind this project is strikingly simple, and yet, it has a distinctive transnational character to it. They know that when it comes to business *"Spanish and Mexicans may both speak Spanish but they definitely speak different languages"*. They have Mexican lawyers, accountants, business administrators and IT specialists. All of them have studied, worked and lived in Spain for two or more years and they know the inner works of the Spanish system upside down. To be in direct contact with potential customers, they have a group of Spanish salespersons that make the initial contact until a meeting is set up.

One day we were talking and we realized that many of the companies we settle in Spain had a need to sell in Spain and that Mexican business representatives were not working out, they were not selling. It was cultural problem because they were trying to sell their products in Spain in the same way they do it in Mexico, you cannot do that, you will never sell like this. So we talked about it and saw a business opportunity (Francisco, W, business administrator, 4 years).

The Mexican sales representatives were too insistent for the Spanish market. More over their accent did not help, because potential costumers often thought that the call was being made

from an outsourced call center somewhere in Latin America, and the sales representatives were not being taken seriously. They solved the problem by hiring natives to make the first call.

But the differences between Mexicans and Spanish went beyond the accent. While a Mexican entrepreneur will close a deal while having breakfast or lunch and demand full attention from his or her employees, Spanish business people tend to separate business from pleasure and in general they seem to be more respectful over their employees time. This becomes evident by spending some time in this particular firm.

The Spanish companies are really square minded, their time is their time, and to be honest I love that. The perception I have about Mexico is that you spend all your time thinking about work, even on the weekends and I think that is wrong. Besides the Spanish are brutally honest, what you see is what you get, unlike the Mexicans with whom you have to be really careful and tip toe around them... or more directly just act as a carpet so they can step on you comfortably (laughs). And here at the firm it happens a lot, just because a lot of our clients are Mexican... with the Spanish clients is easier because they are respectful, but the Mexicans are sending you e-mails on a Friday night or a Saturday afternoon... they just don't care (Jimena, DN, accountant, 4 years).

While the Mexican team often worked well past 10 pm, most of the Spanish team was gone by 6 pm. Of course, this had to do with the time zone of the clients they were working with, but it also had to do with the general idea that the Mexican part of the firm "was working for their country" while the Spanish team was just working. The Spanish team was quite vocal about the hours they had to spend in the office, while the Mexican team was working extended hours, including weekends, because the Mexican clients were quite demanding and disrespectful of the working hours and days.

In any case, what started as a small and personal project in order to secure a job within his field of expertise became a quite large enterprise that employs around 10 highly skilled Mexicans and is directly influencing the economic and human influxes between Mexico and Spain.

b. Builders

The following story is perhaps the most representative of the experiences of middling Mexicans in Madrid. In the majority of the cases, it was by displaying a flexible attitude towards mobility, legal recognition, expectations and a constantly changing labor market, that Mexican middling migrants were not only able to get by, but perhaps build an international work experience.

Up until 2008, the construction sector was perhaps the most important axis of development and employment in Spain, and particularly Madrid, for locals and foreigners alike. It was not unusual to find construction workers with Latin American accents working all over the city. In 2004 one out of every five Latin American immigrants worked in construction (Vicente-Torrado, 2006).

As a foreigner, finding a qualified position in a construction-related job was difficult. In some cases a dual nationality facilitated the incorporation, but the ones who did not have a dual nationality had to find alternative venues, here I present two of these stories. One worked as a paid intern and later on as a researcher. The other was the hidden face of a binational architectural firm, since he had to enter the country with a domestic worker visa, due to the strict quotas and guidelines established to hire foreign architects and civil engineers. These cases show how although official data reveals that the majority of Latin American immigration is performing unskilled jobs, this does not say much about their level of skill as much as it says about the incorporation channels that the Spanish labor market offers to its immigrants (Giménez and Crespo, 2003; Vicente, 2005).

In 2004 Emma, a civil engineer who was fed up with her job prospects in Mexico, sold her car, counted her life savings and moved to Madrid to study a Master in Management of

Construction Companies. As in many of the narratives of the people who left Mexico to gain some international experience as students, Emma's first choice was London, but the lack of external funding and the high cost of living in one of the most cosmopolitan cities of Europe, made her steer the wheel towards Madrid.

Her savings helped her to survive her first year in Madrid, but eventually she ran out of money and had to look for a job. For two months she worked as a waitress in a Mexican chain restaurant known for hiring Mexican students for a salary of 20 Euros a day, which was described as *"the worse two months I spent in Spain. I value the work of a waitress but in all honesty it was hell. The owners were Mexican and they acted like shit"*. In the mean time, she applied for a PhD program and several grants offered by the Mexican government and different Spanish organizations. Eventually, in 2005, a Spanish foundation interested in the construction industry gave her a scholarship to do research on concrete and other construction materials.

In fact, it is worth mentioning that in that moment the construction industry was doing very well. Engineers did not want to do research because it was a shitty salary compared with being in the actual construction site. Construction workers made twice the money I made as an intern. It was hallucinating because construction workers had impressive opportunities contrasted with the rest of the mortals... us who were doing research...I mean in the long run doing research has turned out well for me because I found a niche...but at the time I was just thinking: Hand me a cement bucket! I'll help you with the bricks! (Emma, S, researcher, 7 years).

On the other hand is Javier, who is an experienced architect that left Mexico in 2005 because his furniture and design business was going bankrupt and he received several threats from organized crime in Mexico City. Javier also profited from the boom of the construction industry and he functions as a *broker*. He arrived in 2005 as part of the expansion project of a bi-national architect firm that works in Mexico and Spain. He has worked in several multi-

million Euro projects, such as the design and construction of the Madrilean house of the C.E.O of a Mexican Transnational Company.

When I arrived in Madrid there was no crisis yet, and I remember being at Casa de Campo, looking at the Madrilean horizon filled with cranes and towers. I had read that Spain had the lowest birth rate in the OCDE... it was brutal... I thought: For who are all those buildings? And the prices were insane. I have been saying that it was unrealistic and then of course the economic crisis blew and the first sector that was hit was the construction...(Javier, W, architect, 5 years).

As the result of the impact that the economic crisis of 2008 had in the construction sector, the organization that sponsored Emma's research on construction materials for two years ceased to exist and instead, the Spanish government offered her a four-year grant focus on transportation systems. Emma participated in the extension of Madrid's railway and metro systems while being able to finish her PhD. Nowadays she is working on transportation systems in a research institute in Northern France, waiting *"for things to get better in Spain to go back"*.

Over the course of two years Javier's firm had to fire all of its interns and he was increasingly spending more time working for the branch in Mexico. His job in Madrid was somewhat safe since he was the link between the two branches and as he puts it *"its only one salary and the rent of the studio space, but it's worth to have a binational firm, there is always work in one side or the other"*. After six years of living in Spain he still has a domestic worker visa.

c. Dancers

Throughout the research I had heard people saying that they wanted to transform the image of Mexico and project the way in which the country "really" is: *"modern, developed and with a creative middle class"* (*Diplomat*). There are Mexicans, like the ones that were described

above, who are professionals trying to make a career in hi-tech or providing certain products and services.

Other Mexicans, have to exploit their entrepreneurial side in order to make a living, a middle class living. Many of these businesses would fit into the idea of *ethnic commerce*. They are the owners of the Mexican businesses that populate the city: Mexican restaurants, tortilla factories, food-shops, craft-shops and bars. In varying degrees they are all selling Mexican culture. The kind of culture they are selling, is the product of the mestizaje and the one that ideologues of the Mexican post-revolutionary discourse deemed as the national one. It is a product of hybridity and transformation.

I think many of the business here are importing some of the Mexican cultural values, but they are cliché. Look at the Mexican restaurants it is either images of luchadores, or images of Frida and Diego (Kahlo). They are filled with nostalgic references (Ernesto, W, journalist/restaurant owner, 7 years).

Although the topic of the Indian *roots* of Mexico came sporadically throughout the conversations, mainly to highlight the fact that Mexican society was polarized, few talked about the way in which such roots still permeate everyday life in Mexico.

I think that many of the things Mexico produces at a cultural level are still permeated by the magic of Indian knowledge. That makes it a powerful country because it gives it a distinctive spirit (Sofia, A, filmmaker, intermittent last time 2 years).



The case I am describing here is about a group of performing artists who were not able to fit in the theater scene in Spain and decided to start their own company. They are called *Warriors of Light* and they perform ancient Mexican dances and rituals in European festivals. What is particular about this group is that although their performances are strongly rooted in

Mexico, they cater a mainly international public. They are an example of how some of the barriers for incorporation can be surmounted by adopting and embracing difference.

I talked to Carlos, performing artist and founder of *Warriors of Light*. In 2000, he packed his bags and went to explore the theatre scene in Barcelona and then he decided to move to Madrid because it was easier to get by.

We spent a year in Barcelona but it was rather disheartening. The kind of theater that was being made well, it was not really our thing and we weren't their thing either because of the language. It was just this big wall. I had heaps of experience as a working actor in Mexico, but to be able to work in Barcelona I had not only to learn a new language, but I needed a perfect diction (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years).

Because of the language affinity, he thought Madrid would be a better fit. He was telling me about his first years in Madrid when he was trying to break through the theatre scene and was constantly being rejected, because of his accent and the way he looked. The bulk of the companies in Madrid, were showing the same traditional Spanish plays time and again. In a

sense he had the qualifications but did not possess neither the cultural nor the symbolic capital needed in order to be a working actor.

There are a lot of companies that perform classical theater, they are very attached to the Golden Era and they keep on playing García Lorca and Calderón de la Barca and besides the fact that I was more interested in modern performance, they needed a castizo a very pure accent... so I just went through the path of alternative theater that combined martial arts, dance and acrobatics. I just gave in to my desires and started to explore and express what is going on in Mexico, the cultural and artistic things that are springing and then is when the idea of a ritualistic, ceremonial and Mexican traditional theater came to be, and I said: this is my thing, my mission with theater, art and with Mexico, really (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years).

We finished with the interview and I helped him to set up for a rehearsal. We went to his car and to my surprise he had bongoes, maracas, shells and incense, and then we went to the classroom. We put a paliacate on the floor and set up a little altar right in the center of the class room and then he gave me a couple of shell bracelets to strap to my ankles and we started dancing. We asked for permission to dance, to the west and east, south and north. He said hello to mother Earth, to father Sun and to Quetzalcóatl.

I like to think that I am doing an important job for Mexico, for Spain and for me. I have found that connecting dot. The image of Mexico that has been shown is the one related to the tequila, the sombrero and the mariachi, and everything that happened prior to the conquest is unknown... I mean if even for us (Mexicans) is difficult to know, here they just don't know a thing, they have no idea about our ancient history, or the dances and right now, because of the whole situation (regarding the economic crisis and the Mayan prophecy of the world ending in 2012), people want to know what is this about... (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years)

Warriors of light were catering a mainly European public. From the cities where they toured to the public that went to see their spectacles. These *Dancers* were connecting Mexico to many places by performing Mexicanness in the public space. They were also profiting from the connection between past and present. They were performing a certain kind of Mexicanness that is linked to a history that has been marginalized in the country and now is being interpreted as *avant garde* in Spain.

7.2 PROTOTYPICAL MIDDLE MEXICANS

Thus, the prototypical middle Mexicans in Madrid, the ones who were able to reproduce a middle class identity, had to engage in a balancing act between remaining loyal to the nation while taking advantage of contemporary schemes of mobility and flexibility. This "balancing act" involved knowing when to highlight or underplay certain aspects of their identity, adjust their expectations and manipulate schemes of difference in their favor. It was a *distinction game*, in the Bourdieusian sense, that was learnt throughout their stay in Madrid.

In this sense, and following Bourdieu's (1987) theory on the construction of class, people in intermediate positions within the social space have a wide variety of symbolic strategies to manipulate the symbols of their social position. They can manipulate relations of group membership and to display or conceal them according to the situation at hand (12). Well aware of the structures and constraints on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, these seasoned transnational middle migrants had developed an ability to navigate between Mexico and Spain, and profit from their connection to both.

But this middle position can also be interpreted from the point of view of their position as mediators between two countries: as brokers. By displaying their social, cultural and economic capital they were helping to re-shape the face of Madrid and somehow connect it to Mexico. Some of them were doing it in its most literal sense by helping to re-build it. Others, were working strictly as brokers and bringing some degree of understanding and profit in both

places. The last ones, were recovering a marginalized and forgotten root, and reshaping it as *avant garde* and in the mean time, helping to infuse the Madrilean cultural landscape with new ideas.

8. DISPOSITIONS TOWARDS THE OUTSIDE: FROM LA MALINCHE TO EL JAMAICÓN.

Malinchismo

(From Malinche, nickname of Marina, lover of Hernán Cortés)

1.m. Mex. Attitude of whom shows attachment to foreign things while showing a disdain for the own.

RAE

Jamaicón

Slang word for homesickness used by Mexicans. Mexican soccer defender (sic.) José el Jamaicón Villegas felt sick regularly when abroad. He even claimed once that his wife was ill in order to escape a training camp. Hence, homesickness was referred (sic.) as "el Jamaicón" amongst mexicans (sic).

Urban Dictionary

As it has been shown, in Mexico there is a polarized and constantly shifting position towards the Other that ranges from xenophilia to xenophobia. In the chapter "Our home: the roots and routes of Mexican identity" I described how the mestizo identity, would set the boundaries of belonging to the nation and legitimize the nation's claim over the territory. By doing so, it would present a united and strong front in the face of U.S ambition over the territory. The re-drawing of the boundaries of belonging to the nation in the context of neoliberalism was described in "Migration channels: from traitors to heroes, of friends and foes". This new relationship with the Mexican diaspora derived in the inclusion of its extra-territorial

populations, which once were regarded as "washed down Mexicans" and a "threat to the national unity".

This chapter follows the tension between a narrowly defined belonging to the nation-state *vis a vis* the necessity of flexible dispositions towards the outside and the way in which it shapes the everyday relationship of Mexican middling migrants with the Outside. To do so I will explore these tensions through the changing role of two mythical figures whose stories are determined by their relationship towards the Other: La Malinche and el Jamaicaón. Both figures represent the opposite sides of Mexican attitudes towards the outside: while la Malinche is open and labeled as a traitor, el Jamaicaón is closed and labeled as a fallen hero. The figure of la Malinche has permeated public discourse since the colonial era and represents the shifting positions towards hybridization and mix and el Jamaicaón is a less known contemporary figure of the fallen hero in a world where travel and movement greatly determine an individual's success. These figures become illustrative of the roots and routes of Mexican identity as they are continuously (re)produced in the public discourse as cautionary tales of Mexican attitudes towards the Other.

I will use the myth in an anthropological sense, by focusing on its social function, and its use within the context of governmentality. In Ferguson's words a myth *"is not just a mistaken account but a cosmological blueprint that lays down fundamental categories and meanings for the organization and interpretation of experience, a meaning making device"* (Ferguson, 1999:13- 14).

As a whole, this chapter brings some light into two salient themes. First, the way in which neoliberal governmentality infiltrates the everyday dynamics within the community. This highlights the continuous challenge to the idea of a rooted belonging and a negotiation with the routes found in Madrid. Second, it explores the way in which structural constraints and privileges shape these dispositions. This indicates that their shifting positions within different social fields suggest a loss of privilege outside of Mexico, which has a direct impact in the ways in which Mexican women and men, experience and negotiate their belongings to both places.

8. 1 FROM LA MALINCHE...

"La Malinche" is the popular name given to Malintzin, an Indian woman from southeast Mexico who later became known to Spanish conquerors as Doña Marina. "La Malinche" is a symbolic figure originated during the colonial "encounter" and it has been present in Mexican imaginary ever since. The meanings ascribed to the figure of this woman, reflect to a great extent the history of the (trans) formation of Mexican identity. She has transited from being the "tongue", the translator and the helper during the invasion, to the "womb", the figure of the mother of the new and hybrid identities produced by the colonization. In the post-revolutionary (and hegemonic) discourse she is presented as the traitor while in counter-hegemonic movements such as the Chicana movement, she is the symbol of multiculturalism and hybridization (Messinger Cypess, 2005: 12).

In her youth, Malintzin was sold as a slave to some Maya traders. While living as a slave under Aztec domination, she became bilingual as she learnt Mayan in addition to Nahuatl, her mother tongue. By 1519, at the age of fourteen, Malintzin was offered as a "gift" to Hernán Cortés, along with several other women. Soon enough, the conqueror took advantage of his new "lover' s" bilingualism and knowledge of the local costumes. Malintzin, the slave, became Doña Marina, the translator of Spanish conquerors (Mirandé and Enriquez, 1981: 23-24).

It has also been pointed out that Doña Marina bore the offspring of two Spanish conquerors, Hernán Cortés and later on Juan Jaramillo. Martín Cortés, the son of Hernán Cortés, is though to be the first mestizo. He was uprooted from his mother and thus stripped from his Indian roots while enjoying the rights of a *peninsular*. He joined the colonial endeavors of the Spanish crown as a Knight from the order of Santiago, fought in Algiers and Germany and died in Spain during the Granada wars (Diggs, 1953: 414).

Additional data on the life of this woman is subject to debate and therefore, passages of her life are the arena of (re) interpretation by those with a voice, the ones who tell her story.

For example, according to Bernal Diaz's, conqueror and later on chronicler of the Spanish invasion, Doña Marina was born into nobility and then sold as a slave by her own mother. He describes Doña Marina's role in the Spanish conquest of Mexico as pivotal, as she had a role as a mediator and a "key strategist" in forging alliances with indigenous groups against Aztec domination. According to this version of events, she was motivated by a deep faith in Christianity, religion to which she converted soon after she joined Cortés and his colonial endeavor (in Pratt, 1993:867).

After Mexico achieved its independence, Doña Marina was stripped from many of the positive characteristics that were inscribed to her figure during the colony and was re-framed under a negative light. Doña Marina becomes "La Malinche", the reincarnation of a Desirable Whore/Terrible Mother, who had sold her children to the conqueror. As a way to reject any association with Spain, Doña Marina was transformed into "La Malinche", who is perhaps the most hated woman in America (Messinger Cypess, 1991: 9).

8.1.1 Contemporary era: The traitor and the heroine

In 1950, Octavio Paz announced to the world that we, Mexicans, are the offspring of "La chingada": *Somos los hijos de la chingada*. In his seminal and often controversial essay on Mexican identity "El laberinto de la soledad", Paz depicted a profoundly misogynistic and self-hating Mexican that was unable to deal with his own origins, which were located in the figures of who are seen as the mythical "parents" of Mexicans: Hernán Cortés and la Malinche.

In Mexico being "un hijo(a) de la chingada" implies that the recipient of the insult is the product of a rape and/or an illicit sexual relationship. La "chingada", is an open woman who has been raped and conversely a "chingón" is a closed a man who has been successful in his attempts. According to Paz, even when la Malinche represented rape of Indian women during the Spanish invasion and colonial era, she "*gave herself willingly to the conqueror, who in turn abandoned her*" and that is why she cannot find forgiveness (Paz, 1998: 91).

One has to keep in mind that the book was published towards the end of the presidency of Miguel Alemán (1945-1951) and while Paz was part of the Mexican Diplomatic Service in France. This was the first civilian presidency in Mexico since the beginning of the revolution and the era of the "Mexican Miracle", which was marked by an unprecedented economic growth. Such economic growth was achieved because of a widespread State's intervention in the economy, which had protected the growth of local industries by establishing tariff barriers in a time when the foundations for a global and neoliberal economy were being established through the Bretton Woods Agreement (1945) and the General Agreement on Trade Tariffs (1947). In his essay, Paz was placing the blame and resentment towards la Malinche in the context of the birth of neoliberalism and a globalized economy. In post-revolutionary Mexico the distrust towards the outside was as big as the hatred towards la Malinche, in the words of Paz:

...that is why the success of the derogatory adjective "malinchista", recently put in motion by newspapers to denounce all of those infected by foreignizing tendencies. The malinchistas are partisans of Mexico opening to the outside: the true sons of la Malinche, who is the personification of la Chingada (own translation, Paz, 1998: 97).

In this context, if la Malinche is a mytho-historical product of coloniality, the malinchistas, *"infected by foreignizing tendencies"* and *"giving (themselves) willingly to the conqueror"*, were born in the context of an increasingly globalized economy.

North of the Mexican border, in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and California, the myth of Malinche came into play with respect to a different but interrelated project of construction of identity (Alarcón, 2005:126; Messiger-Cypress, 2005: 22). According to Enriquez and Mirande (1978), the label was also applied to Chicanas who left the community to seek higher education. In this sense the label was used to police the assimilation into mainstream "white" culture and the alliance to feminism (cited on Pratt, 1993:862).

The hegemonic view of La Malinche was contrarrested within the Chicana feminist movement, which placed her actions as a translator for Cortés as an act of will and an "open" view of the world. La Malinche then, became one of the articulating symbols of the Chicana Movement, who found in her figure a familiar one. While Malintzin in an act of agency and survival Hispanized herself, these Chicanas are perceived to be "Americanizing themselves" and are suffering from a double process of exclusion: from the dominant culture but also from the dominated culture (Alarcón, 2005).

8.1.2 The cosmopolitan

Mexicans in Spain used the term *malinchista* as a tool for policing their own behavior and the behavior of other Mexicans. Of course, in Madrid, the term acquired a very literal sense that could hurt the most detached sensibilities: a Mexican favoring anything Spanish. Thus, while in Mexico the term is thrown carelessly to accuse anyone who seems to be favoring the "foreign" in lieu of the "national", in Madrid it seemed that there was a certain degree of controversy over what constituted an affront to Mexicaness. The only thing that was an uncontroverted act of malinchism was speaking with a Spanish accent. By the virtue of a differentiated pronunciation of two letters, the "s" and the "z", a Mexican in Madrid would be the target of criticism and mockery from the rest of its connationals. Almost everything else could be interpreted as the product of a necessary adaptation into the new place.

In many cases, what Mexican middling migrants interpreted as an act of adaptation into Spanish society and as a necessary step into making their lives easier in a new place, was interpreted by the Mexicans at home as an act of malinchism. For example, by adopting a more direct approach to social interactions they learnt in Madrid, they were distancing themselves from what their families and friends perceived to be "good manners": they were stepping out of the national game of avoiding a blunt "no" by replacing it with a polite "a lo mejor" (perhaps) or "ahorita" (in a little while). There were many stories about the way in which Mexicans middling migrants were accused of having "Hispanized" their manners in their first visits to Mexico. In the eyes of the shocked parents, siblings and friends who stayed

put they were not only starting to lose their accents and their words, but they were also losing their "good manners".

The only people I met who satisfied the requirements to be labeled a Malinche in both sides of the Atlantic, were women. As their Chicana counterparts they were suffering of a double process of, if not exclusion, chastisement from Mexicans at home and abroad. One of them was a young woman who was divorced at a young age and people around her thought she lived a "scandalous life". Eventually she met and married a Spanish man and "fortunately!" moved to Spain.

...there are some Mexicans that ask me if I'm Spanish, and then they tell me "That's so wrong!" like implying that I'm being malinchista. And the thing is, when I came to Spain, they treated you better if you blended in, instead of coming and saying: yes, I'm different. I was fed up, because every time I showed up saying "Good Morning" they would ask me: "Where are you from?"... and you end up doing things the way they do them (Cristina, P, interior designer/entrepreneur, 6 years)

And you did it on purpose?

The accent thing, no, it is a factory defect, integrating yes... it was clear to me that I am a guest here, that this is not my home and that "when in Rome... well do what the Romans do"¹³ (Cristina, P, interior designer/entrepreneur, 6 years).

Even in this case, the adoption of the accent was framed in a negative light as "a factory defect" implying that under "non-defected" circumstances she would have kept her accent while modifying other behaviors as an adaptation strategy. In any case, in a transnational setting, Mexicans were better off acting as Malinches, as this open and flexible attitude was

¹³ I am roughly translating what she said, in the original text she said "A donde fueres haz lo que vieres" and its literal translation is wherever you go do what you see its done.

related to a cosmopolitan orientation that is described by Ulf Hannerz (1996) as a *"willingness to engage with the other... and intellectual and aesthetic openness towards divergent cultural experiences"* (103).

8.2 ...TO EL JAMAICÓN

For better or for worse, the term *malinchista* was only one of the ways in which the public displays of Mexicaness were subjected to policing in Madrid. While acting "too Spanish" by adopting the accent was certainly criticized, being overly attached to Mexicaness was also criticized and seen as an incapacity of some Mexicans to make themselves at home while abroad: they were suffering from the *Jamaicón* syndrome. The figure of *el Jamaicón*, whose story I was unaware of until I moved to Madrid, is used by some Mexicans to describe the rootedness to Mexico that some displayed while living abroad.

José, *el Jamaicón* Villegas, was a famous soccer player who was unable to perform outside of Mexico. Widely known as an outstanding defense player, *el Jamaicón* was the last frontier between the Other team and his own goalkeeper.

In 1958, when the Mexican government was petitioning to be the host of the next Olympic Games¹⁴, the Mexican Soccer Federation arranged a series of matches in Europe to test the National team's performance abroad. From that moment on, what happened to *El Jamaicón* Villegas takes mythical proportions and becomes a cautionary tale for Mexicans travelling abroad.

Depending on who tells the story, *El Jamaicón* Villegas was unable to protect the national team from the offences of the opposite team, either in England, Portugal or Switzerland. Although there are different versions of the story, the message is clear: *El Jamaicón* had a rather chauvinistic explanation of why he was failing to perform outside of Mexico.

El Jamaicón became infamous because of a single phrase that is reproduced time and again in Mexican media even when it has been more than half a century since the incident.

¹⁴ The petition was granted five years later and Mexico City became the host of the 1968 Olympic Games, which sparked a massive student protest that would end up in the mass murder of hundreds of students just ten days prior to the opening ceremony.

Apparently, when he was asked why he was hanging on the gardens instead of being at the dinner that the Federation organized for the team, he showed a distraught demeanor and answered:



Trino, www.reforma.com¹⁶

How am I supposed to have dinner if what they cooked is "comida de rotos"¹⁵? What I want is some chalupas, or some sopes or a nice pozole, not that garbage that is not even Mexican (Alatriste, 2006: 91).

From this story derives the idea of the "Jamaicón syndrome", which is defined as a feeling nostalgia and homesickness plaguing an otherwise successful Mexican who ceased to be a "chingón(a)" outside his/her homeland and instead became a shadow of his/her former self.

8.2.1 The Mexican Bravado: El chingón is chingado

The mythology around el Jamaicón Villegas is not coincidental since soccer players are arguably the epitome of masculinity in Mexico. The topic of soccer aficionados was frequently raised as an example of Mexicaness and more specifically an aggressive portrayal male Mexicaness, this contrasted with the idea of an open and often submissive portrayal of feminized attitudes that the figure of la Malinche embodied.

¹⁵ "roto" is related to upper class attitudes, which brings some light into the belief that cosmopolitan orientations are exclusive of the "elites".

¹⁶ We are triumphing in Europe!./ Triumphs in Holland, Triumphs in Germany.../ Of Course! Until they run out of tortas ahogadas and they get the Jamaicón Syndrome.

Its a very distrustful culture but it is also very gandalla¹⁷...I came to the World Cup in Germany and there were al lot of Mexicans, and of course! They were always thinking about ways to twist the rules: how to sneak alcohol into the stadium and then feeling proud because they tricked the Germans. I was in a bus that they kidnapped in Germany, they made a German-speaking kid threaten the driver to deviate from the established route and take us directly to the stadium... (Bruno, S, student, 7 months).



Every six years, during the World Cup, soccer players emerge as the national heroes in a country that paralyzes and submerges itself in a form of light nationalism and intense machismo that lasts just a few weeks until the national team is kicked out of the competition.

Mexico vs South Africa, July 2011

Mexican masses cheer up the national team and highlight their manliness by yelling "*¡(Insert the name of the country) va a probar el chile nacional!*" which is roughly translated as the adversary having a "taste" of Mexican penis. Sooner than later, "el chile nacional" proves to be ineffective and the Mexican public submerges in a process of auto-reflexivity to understand what went wrong. Was it lack of funding? Poor training? Was it the product of complex of inferiority steaming from the colonial period? Was the referee a racist? Was the game rigged? Eventually someone will mention the story of el Jamaicón and the explanation will become self-evident: some Mexicans are unable to cope with being away from their home.

¹⁷ As a Mexicanism *gandalla* relates to a person who twists things to get advantage of it without deserving them. It is an abusive attitude that not necessarily involves physical violence.

The use of the figure of El Jamaicón Villegas is not only limited to explain the failure of soccer players in international matches, but in a contemporary globalized world it becomes a cautionary tale for those privileged Mexicans who fail to make themselves at home while abroad. In a world where mobility for some implies the reproduction of a contemporary middle class identity, failing to make oneself at home in the world, goes against the values of cosmopolitanism and "openness" that middling migrants are supposed to hold in high regard.

Just go one Wednesday to "La Malquerida" (a Mexican bar in Madrid) and it is filled with Mexicans who perhaps are going to be here just for a couple of months and the only thing they do is hang out with other Mexicans. They come here to hang out in Mexican bars instead of getting to know the city... and the thing is they are always complaining about discrimination but Mexicans are close-minded... they are always missing their tortillitas, their taquitos and their little cousins... they are overly attached to their things. They all suffer from the Jamaicón syndrome (Marco, DN, journalist, 4 years).

The Jamaicón syndrome for Mexican middling migrants thus, represents a direct affront to the idea that in the context of the international mobility of the highly skilled, human capital is enough to achieve success regardless of the social structure or reproduction (Favell, Feldblum and Smith 2007:21). In this sense while the term malinchista is used to control and police "openness", the Jamaicón syndrome is used to diagnose "closeness".

In Madrid, although Mexican men and women could experience an acute sense of loss that could be labeled as suffering from el Jamaicón syndrome, these attitudes tended to be more prevalent in men and more often than not, those who experienced this sense of loss of male privilege would eventually return to Mexico.

In a sense, Mexican women in Madrid experienced a betterment in at least one aspect of their every day lives because they were removed from the dynamics of a society that limited their freedom in several ways, while for a man movement could derive in the loss of all privilege,

and the interpretations of La Malinche and El Jamaicón are symptomatic of it. In Mexico, a woman that manages to keep herself alive under conditions of enslavement and colonial exploitation is deemed a traitor and a whore; while a man who is unable to perform his job under the best of circumstances is at most a pitiful figure worth of understanding, because after all, he was away from the soil where he belonged.

In this logic, it is not the restorative power of Mexican soil and its food that makes some of its (wo)men stronger, but their strength is rooted in the hierarchical relations of power that prevail in the country. For some people, movement does not imply betterment but the loss of certain kind of privilege specially when coming from the higher end of a deeply stratified society along the lines of class, race and gender.

8.3 THE RE-NEGOTIATION OF PRIVILEGE

The Malinches were not acting as such because they "did not love" their country, and the Jamaicones were not missing their country because they "loved" it so much. Besides their ability to adapt to new situations or avoid an extreme rootedness to Mexico, the fact was that their mobility and ability to feel at home in a new place, was tightly determined by a set of structural constraints and privileges that were made more salient because of movement. As it has been mentioned throughout the work, for this set of migrants a great part of the construction of home was centered in their ability to reproduce a middle class identity. Of course, such reproduction depended on the aspects they valued the most and their ability to negotiate their position.

As it was mentioned in the section sketching the characteristics of middling migration, mobility for these subjects is not frictionless and the sorts of capitals they possess (and value) do not necessarily translate from one place to the next. So, life in Madrid posted a new challenge. They left a relatively comfortable life as middle classers and had to make a new life in a place where they were foreigners. Their new life in the city made them (more) aware of the privileges and constraints that their middle class life in Mexico entailed.

In some cases the loss of such privileges and constraints would make them re-evaluate their stay and go back to Mexico or move elsewhere. In some others, these privileges were viewed as a *"golden cage"* and in these cases the positive aspects of everyday life in Madrid, would outweigh the loss of privilege. In the following section, I will describe three of the most discussed topics that came up during the process of evaluation of their life in both places: gender relations, class and opportunities.

8.3.1 Gender: The nice Mexican girls

When asked about the things they disliked about Madrid, the people who had recently arrived in Madrid would refer to very specific things about the city. That the city was *"dirty and smelled like pee"*, that there were *"junkies sitting on my doorsteps"*, that *"pedestrians are rude"*. When asked if that did not happen in their hometowns Mexico, the answer they generally gave was either a rotund *"no"*, a more nuanced *"maybe, but I never noticed"* and finally, the ones who said that it did happen but they were not confronted to it on a daily basis.

They did not notice because urban Mexican middle classes experience a sanitized version of their hometowns. In order to isolate themselves from poverty, street-violence and other dynamics steaming from a deeply polarized society, they recur to certain strategies to increase their perception of security. Upper and middle classes in Mexico construct their everyday lives and homes in safe *havens*¹⁸. It can be housing in "safer" neighborhoods or gated communities, access to private transportation or sheltered leisure spaces. This of course facilitates mobility while increasing the perception of security, but it also makes them experience the urban setting through the window of a car or a building.

Of course, when they moved to Madrid things changed. The vast majority of Mexicans in the city lived in central neighborhoods relatively close to their offices, businesses or universities, and they started walking or taking public transportation. This new way of experiencing the

¹⁸ Haven in this case is more related to the notion of security but the next example will show how it is also linked with domesticity.

urban setting forced them to see "the unpleasant" things about the place, but also to experience a newly found sense of freedom. This experience was more or less the same for men and women.

In contrast, in Mexico there was a stark difference in the way in which men and women experienced the place. Although both genders were prone to crime related violence to put it bluntly *"the presence of fear produces a 'spatial expression of patriarchy', an exclusionary process that kept women off public spaces, the 'domain of men'"*(Valentine, 1989: 135 cited in Yeoh and Yeow, 1997:285). For Mexican women such fear was not only related to the fear of physical harm but also to the fear of social rejection. These different experiences became evident within the first visits to Mexico, where men and women alike were trying to experience their hometowns in the same way they had experienced Madrid. While for men getting used to life back in Mexico was an annoyance for many women, it constituted an alienating experience that would in some cases made them re-evaluate their decision.

[When] I went back to Mexico in 2003 it was so difficult to go back to my parents house because I think that in Mexico you have no freedom. I'm not talking about family constraints, I'm talking about not being able to go out in the street, in Mexico you feel like at 7 P.M the area is placed under curfew. Here everything is closer, you move around and maybe come back at three o'clock... it's just this freedom. (Ana, S, student, intermittent 4 years)

Some men were also "pushed" out of the country because of fear, but their experiences were marked by a specific event, rather than by the pervasive and everyday feeling that the majority of women talked about. When a man decided to leave the country because of fear, it was because of an imminent and explicit threat to his safety and even in those situations it was framed as a temporary and specific situation.

They told me there was a death threat on a Thursday and then on the following Wednesday I was flying to Spain... so from one day to the next one they put you in a different place and I mean that is cool, but I was in shock. My life changed abruptly. Sometimes I was sad, and sometimes I was really pissed off and it was like ¡HIJOS DE SU PINCHE MADRE¹⁹! (Julio, W, journalist, 4 years).

And would you go back?

(Nod) Yeah I mean I know that I can stay here for a very long time... but if they told me I could go back I would. It is not unappealing, I am neither mad at them, nor I see things in black and white... I know things are really bad right now but in general it is not a bad place to live, but besides that I know that here I cannot do the sort of work I really like...(Julio, W, journalist, 4 years)

Unlike the women, who grew up conditioned "to take care of themselves" and "avoid" danger by limiting their freedom, men seemed to be more sheltered. Unaware of their own privilege as middle class, professional and often whiter than average men, they often stated that things were "not as bad" in Mexico, until they really were.

In addition to this pervasive idea of physical harm, the lives of women were also marked by a fear of judgment and social rejection that was rationalized after their living experiences in Madrid. Because of the freedom that everyday life in Madrid conveyed and because, to a certain extent, they were removed from the dynamics of Mexican machista attitudes, Mexican women started adopting certain habits that in Mexico would be frowned upon.

There are many things [I would like to adopt from my new friends], like moving in with my boyfriend. I know that back in Mexico I wouldn't do it because of the culture and the society. Or this willingness to know about new places and peoples... or even silly things like being more direct without feeling like you are being rude (Cecilia, S, student, 2 years)

¹⁹ Sons of their fucked -up mothers!

Since they were aware that some of the habits they adopted in Madrid would be judged in Mexico, women would soon enough learn how to adapt their habits depending on the situation at stake to fulfill the societal expectations around their gender.

In this sense, the idea of freedom, particularly for women, was one of the aspects of their everyday life in Madrid that produced a sense of belonging to the place. Madrid had become a safe haven that did not entail constraint but freedom. It was generally women who were more open to trade some of the privileges they enjoyed back in Mexico, in order to be able to live in a place where they could "*be themselves*".

8.3.2 Class: A bath of reality

I did not realize how many Mexican tourists you could encounter in one afternoon in Madrid until I engaged in one of my informant's favorite game: "guess who is Mexican". I started to spot some of them because they were wearing some sort of identifier when strolling around the city: tiny Mexican flags sewn into their handbags and backpacks, the national soccer team t-shirt and in one case a guy wearing a poncho with the Mexican flag. *Jamaicones*, I thought to myself. My informant had a finer taste for the game and she could identify them even without the flag and distinguish if they were tourists or residents. When I asked what she saw, in them, besides the accent, she pointed out some fashion choices and general demeanors, and then she told me:

If they just arrived in, they have the typical attitude of "I am the shit", just acting all fresa as if no one deserves them... and the ones who have been here for longer, well they already had a bath of reality and, What do they care if you have money or not? They act nice regardless. And I mean some complain that the Spanish are rude but the thing is, it is part of who they are, You know? They display an equal-opportunity rudeness that is not related to class like in Mexico (Jimena, DN, accountant, 4 years).

Acting "fresa", which can be roughly translated as snob attitude, was a self-entitled demeanor that steamed from the idea that because of their social class they were privileged and somewhat superior. Of course, this snob attitude was closely related to the deep stratification within Mexican society, which in Madrid was not understood under the same terms. This stratification was time and again pointed out as one of the things Mexicans in Madrid disliked about their country. These are some of the answers to the question: What do you dislike about the place you come from?

The truth is there is a huge inequality in Mexico, and we refuse to see it (Eduardo, W, IT consultant, 3 years).

It is a society that is so classist and racist that I don't feel comfortable anymore... (José, W, lawyer, 3 years).

All this division is absurd, the poor ones, the Indians, the güeritos... it's insane (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years)

Besides the inequality they say there is? In all seriousness, I try to keep my distance from certain Mexicans because I think they have their little Mexico set up here, uh? Corrupt, classist and racist assholes (Emma, S, researcher, 7 years)

The bath of reality in this context involved a certain loss of privilege, not necessarily because they had lost income, but because they were well aware that the sense of self-entitlement that was attached to that income in Mexico, had lost its meaning in Madrid. Bigger houses, domestic service and a generally sheltered everyday life that could foster this snobbish attitude were waiting for them in Mexico if they chose to go back. In Madrid, they lived in

smaller apartments, sometimes shared, and located in mid-income districts²⁰. Although their income was close to or even well above the median they were still not able to afford the same privileges they enjoyed in Mexico and even when they could, the effect was not the same.

The case of Clara, a young woman who was clearly mourning the loss of a class-related privilege, is a prototypical example of the "fresa" attitude. She spent a great part of the afternoon explaining why she was planning to go back to Mexico, and she tended to start her phrases with something along the lines of "*I know this will sound conceited and/or pretentious*" indicating that she was well aware of the fact that this sort of attitude was frowned upon in Spain. As it happened with the majority of the people I talked to, she missed having a bigger house and was certain of the fact that under the current conditions of the real state market in Madrid, she would not be able to afford a house like the one she had in Mexico. But unlike the majority of the people I talked to, Clara, missed something else:

And I don't know but (I miss) the kind of bond you make back there with the people who help you. My maid was with us for 18 years, I saw her everyday and I talked a lot to her, and they become part of your family... I mean they earn shit but it is not like here... my maid gets 20 per day and she just barely cleans the house and leaves. I don't know her, I don't know anything about her life... and for the money I pay her (Clara, S, government representative, 5 years).

For her, having a *maid* to whom she felt close to was important even though she was paying her *shit*. It was not a sheer matter of income, but instead, was more related to the idea that in Mexico because of her position she could demand certain things from the people that worked for her, which in Madrid would not be provided. While the experiences of most middling migrants were marked by a need to reproduce a middle class identity independently of the place where they were, there were differences regarding what this reproduction entailed. For

²⁰ The majority lived in the city Center or Salamanca, Chamartín, Chamberí and Moncloa.

some, this reproduction was only possible in a context with a deep economic and social polarization where their prestige and privilege was more salient.

8.3.3 Opportunities: At the mouse's head or at the lion's tail

As it was explained in the chapter on "Migration Channels", Mexicans tend to move to Spain to study or to explore new professional and cultural landscapes. Although many of them go back to Mexico or move elsewhere after one or two years, others opt for a longer experience in the country and even resettle indefinitely in Spain. When they choose to stay, they rarely do so because of economic reasons and in general they tend to stay because they fell in love or simply because they liked their everyday lives in Madrid. Opting for longer stays, as it was shown in the last chapter, involved a process of re-adjustment of expectations and a great deal of flexibility, many Mexicans did not display.

"What's better? To be at the mouse's head or at the lion's tail?" one of my informants asked me. I had talked to him at various stages, first as a law student, then as a part-time worker at the Mexican Embassy in Madrid and finally when he was re-evaluating his stay. Using the ancient proverb he described the relationship between both countries as Mexico being at the "head" of Latin American development and Spain being at the "tail" of the European Union's. In that sense, although there was a recognition of Spain's impressive economic upturn in the last thirty years, he also felt that because of Mexico's constant developing stage and because of the social capital he had, there were more professional opportunities.

But the fact was that this idea of *"the mouse's head and the lion's tail"* could be also be related to their migratory statuses. Many Mexicans I talked to over the years wanted to stay in Madrid, but they could not do it or at least not while remain being documented immigrants. Some would ask themselves what was best, to stay in Madrid under uncertain migratory statuses or go back to Mexico where at least they had the legal right to live and work in the country.

In general Mexicans in Madrid had to leave the country within a few years of their arrival. The student visas were granted over a two to four year period, and since the economic crisis

of 2008 many of the workers were losing their jobs. In any case, they had to start contemplating strategies to move elsewhere or to secure a more stable migratory status. This would happen through a change into the General Regime by obtaining a work contract or to the European Union Regime by marrying their (European) partners.

For this particular set of migrants, relying on marriage to secure a stable migratory status in Spain was seen as a last resource and sometimes as a defeat. Among the younger and more liberal Mexicans there was a running joke about bi-national couples getting married, that played with the words *visa* and *vida* (life) and described the marriage as "*finding the love of her/his visa*"²¹. This because marrying "for papers" was associated to women in a more vulnerable position and in this context was stigmatized as a *Malinchista* behavior. But also because of its implications: sometimes, formal education and other sorts of typically middle class capitals are not enough to obtain legal recognition in another country (Kofman, 2006, Sorensen, 2005).

Although looking to extend their stay through a work contract was most of the times regarded as the best option, the conditions under which the contracts were granted, particularly in the context of the 2008 economic crisis, were in most cases right down abusive and implied accepting a job that did not match their skills.

Right now, I'm about to give up. It is getting very hard because they are always trying to get advantage of you, a company offered to get me a work permit but they want half of my salary. I can always go back to Mexico, there are many things I don't like about it but at the end of the day, that chaotic city has so many things to offer...
(Maria, S, IT consultant, 2 years).

As much as there is the pervasive idea of a limitless mobility for those who possess certain kinds of capitals, as middling migrants do, the fact is there are several constraints to mobility. It is not only a matter of will, openness and cosmopolitan attitudes, but first and foremost it is

²¹ Encontró al amor de su visa.

a question of opportunities. For the vast majority of those who left Madrid, it was not a question of extreme rootedness to Mexico and its dynamics, it was simply a question of opportunities.

I went through a rebirth process, you don't exist until you have your papers. And then, here, being an immigrant is counterproductive, it is negative and it is seen as bad. You have to exploit your entrepreneurial side (Isabel, S, executive assistant/real state broker, 5 years).

As it will be shown in the next chapter, Mexicans who wanted to stay in Madrid and were able to do so, had to display a great deal of flexibility and learn how to adjust their expectations to be able to deal with some of the structural constraints towards mobility and re-settlement.

8.4 SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

As a way to conclude this chapter I will present a narrative that reflects to a certain extent some of the gender dynamics seen in the Mexican community in Spain and gives some insight on the differences in the home-making experiences of men and women.

Such home-making experiences resemble the tension between the figure of La Malinche and El Jamaicón. In general, men talked about the importance of their jobs and/or studies and the way in which they were planning to use them. Their ability feel at home was highly determined by their performance in their jobs and sustained by a male privilege. Women focused on their everyday lives and the ways in which they felt free to "*be themselves*" (walking alone in the street, dating different people, dressing in a certain way) this was independently of the jobs they had. For them a feeling of home was more related to their ability to be free to publicly express their identities, which in turn was undermined by this same male privilege.

Of course to a certain extent they all had experienced some degree of loss at a certain point. They were all living in smaller houses and some of them complained about things such as their inability to pay for domestic services or having a car. This aspect of their everyday lives was analyzed on "Class: a bath of reality" and it will be further explored in the next chapter "The experience of home overtime".

The story of Wife and Husband

There was this couple of postgraduate students, Wife and Husband, whom I interviewed for the first time when they had only spent a few months living in Madrid. At the time, I was rather hesitant on spending too much time with them because they had just arrived in the city and at first they stated that they were going back to Mexico in no more than one or two years. Before I met them we exchanged a few e-mails where they told me what were they doing in the city and how they ended up there. On paper, they seemed like a united front, they even had similar names.

Wife and Husband were inseparable. They arrived together to our first meeting, and as awkward as it might seem now, I asked one to wait on another table while I talked to the other partner. Wife was talkative and her interview took longer. Husband was concise and I had a hard time making him feel at ease.

They felt their home was where they both were, independently of the location. They were short on money and lived in a tiny apartment, they missed their bigger house. They worked together in Mexico on a regional development program ran by a private university and their stay in Madrid was sponsored by that university and because of this, they had to go back.

At the end of the evening and with two separate interviews recorded we all sat together to drink a cup of coffee and talk about their respective interviews. And then it was when the fun began.

Wife would replace a typically Mexican "*yes, please*" with a very Spanish "*vale*" and Husband would make a snide remark on his wife's willingness to adopt a new set of words.

After a while, Wife fired back *"So did he tell you? he likes to buy overpriced tortillas at a Mexican specialty store to make quesadillas every night, for dinner"*. At the time, it was a rather expensive habit since a dozen corn tortillas would cost around 4 Euros, and they tended to be stiff and grainy. He responded by stating that she was making weekly long distance calls to her sister in Mexico, and that was expensive too. Not if you are using Skype, I thought.

I asked then if they were really convinced about going back to Mexico and Husband just answered with a short and concise "yes" while Wife just sat there silently. Then I asked what they would need in order to contemplate the idea of extending their stay:

Wife: I mean (Spain) it has a different standard of living and the thing is with a steady salary you can have a better life, and more opportunities to see more things. Obviously I would like to be near my family but you also have to think about yourself, and it depends on the opportunities you have. For me, having children is important and I think that here they would have more stimulus and thinking about that your children's education would be richer here than in Mexico. I would like for them to have such stimulus.

Husband: I'm still thinking on going back. Because we can do something over there, to contribute, mainly because of the kind of work we do there and because I like living there. I know I don't belong here and that I belong to Mexico and if I can do something for the place where I live I rather do it here (he meant there, in Mexico)

Wife was open to new experiences and although she stated time and again that the plan was going back to Mexico because they had contract with the university that was sponsoring their postgraduate studies, she liked to play with the idea of staying in Madrid. Husband, gave reasons beyond the contract they had with the university and stated that he felt it was *" a moral obligation"*.

We parted our separate ways and I told them I would contact them later to see if overtime their life and perspectives on Madrid had changed. I understood them. I also had a scholarship to study abroad and at the beginning of my postgraduate studies it was clear to me that after two years I was going back to pay back the money and privileges I was enjoying. Fast-forward two years, and I was so used to life outside of Mexico that the idea of going back started to blur and instead, I moved to a third country for three more years. For me and for most of the people I had met, things changed overtime.

Six months later, around the one-year anniversary of their arrival into the city I met them on a bench in front of a University building. That time I knew better and I kept them together right from the beginning. I asked them what had changed and whether or not they felt at home in Madrid. Here is what they said:

Husband: I have more of a routine. Time passes by faster and when I am going on my way to school or back I don't notice where I am... you are immersed in your everyday life and in the city and you stop noticing that you are no longer in your place. And we hired cable TV with programs from Mexico. I hired it because of the soccer games and sometimes I feel I am already in Mexico, and it is warmer so it transports me back.

Wife: When I ride the bus and I see people from Latin America or Africans there is something in my subconscious that tells me: look, they are foreigners. It is like I have assimilated. As if you felt that you belong. You are living here and you feel part of the place.

Husband was clearly feeling out of place while Wife started to develop an attachment to Madrid and in a sense this was foreseeable right from the beginning. While Husband felt the need (and was able) to participate in the development of Mexico and hold a position in which he could intervene in the decision-making process of the country, Wife was focused on providing a stimulating environment for her and her family. Those were different priorities

that had to do not only with their position in Mexico, but also with their new position in Spain. While husband mourned the loss of a privilege "doing something for his country", wife celebrated the idea of a new and stimulating environment.

La Malinche o el Jamaicón? To be integrated or to feel out of place?

9. THE EXPERIENCE OF HOME OVERTIME

"I don't feel at home here I feel completely different but that does not imply that I feel bad: I feel at ease" (Andrés, S, lawyer, 9 months)

"I feel divided, 50/50?" (Cecilia, S, student, 2 years)

"I am the adoptive son of Spain" (Fernando, DN, publicist, 5 years)

"If feel my home is here, I got used to the idea of belonging to a place where I'm not from"(Amalia, W, researcher, intermittent, last time 4 yrs)

At the beginning of the work, I asked: How does movement and change affect the forms of individual and collective dwelling? To feel at home is not a singular feeling but a plural layered sentiment that can be experienced in different places, at varying geographical scales and through different aspects of the everyday life. As the question indicates, home refers to both individual and collective forms of dwelling: from the body, to the household and the (imagined) community. But home it is also a process that happens over time.

This chapter intends to answer this question by exploring the forms of individual and collective dwelling of Mexicans in Madrid and the way this changes overtime. In this sense, it intends to examine migration and home-making practices as events that develop across space and overtime and that continue long after the initial act of moving from one place to another.

The epigraph above shows some of the statements that were made regarding how this group of middling migrants felt about Madrid. The intention behind the selection of those precise statements is quite obvious: as time passed by, the attachments to the place became stronger.

The time of stay was important not only because it helped them to familiarize with the city and create new routines, but also because it gave them more perspective on the things that made them feel at home or out of place.

In a sense, as time passed by they lost the uncontested feeling of belonging to Mexico and started to see home as a multiplicity of attachments to different places, people and routines. Their attachments to place ceased to be unconscious, rooted belongings and instead became conscious and negotiated attachments to place, *senses of place* in Yi Fu Tuan's words. This was independently of whether they chose to stay, go back or move elsewhere.

In order to explain a range of home-making experiences at different levels, I will rely on three elements associated with home that were found across the literature on home and synthesized by Duyvendak (2011).

I. The body: Familiarity.

Knowing the place

II. The household: Haven

Physical/Material safety; mentally safe/predictable

Place for retreat, relaxation, intimacy and domesticity

III. The community: Heaven

A public place where one can collectively be, express and realize oneself; where one feels publicly free and independent. Home here embodies shared histories; a material and/or symbolic place with one's own people and activities.

(Table taken from: Duyvendak, 2011: 38)

This final chapter, sketches the ways in which the home-making process happens overtime and at different scales: the body, the household and the community. As a whole it shows how mobility challenges a rooted sense of belonging and in general derives in a negotiated sense of place. It departs from building both poles of experience as ideal types. On the one hand, the experiences of people arriving in to a new place, and on the other the experiences of people

who have, overtime, constructed a feeling of home in this new place. The complexity of the process of what happens in-between was sketched in the chapter "Dispositions towards the other: From La Malinche to el Jamaicón". Nonetheless, the discussion will be followed, on a third ideal type, which brings some light into the decision making-process, the barriers and the pathways behind a negotiated feeling of belonging that can derive in the return to the place of origin, the extension of the stay in the new place or the migration to a new destination.

9.1 CONSTRUCTING THE IDEAL TYPES

Along the research, I identified three different stages in the experience of Madrid and the way in which this experience overtime influenced the home-making practices of this group of Mexicans in Madrid. These three different stages were roughly determined by the time of stay, by their migratory statuses and their life stage.

The experience of the people on the first group, *Newcomers*, was concerned with achieving some sense of familiarity in Madrid, and their experience was marked by the preconceived notion of a temporary stay in Madrid, which was reflected in their (mainly) temporary migratory statuses. The experience of the people on the second group, *Re-evaluating their stay*, was marked by a process of re-evaluation of their stay in Madrid, and generally was related to an uncertain migratory status or a change in their lives (a marriage, a divorce, a job). In contrast, the people in the third group, *From here and from there*, was no longer trying to *feel at home* in a new place and instead, *was at home* in Madrid; thus, they were more concerned with how to reconcile an increasing sense of belonging to Madrid, with their attachment to Mexico. The people in this group, was anchored physically, materially and emotionally to Madrid.

9.2 FAMILIARITY: TO KNOW THE PLACE.

From some perspectives, home is associated with familiarity, order, continuity and place bound culture (Duyvendak, 2011:27). Familiarity is one of the things that make us feel at home: we know a place so well that becomes part of ourselves thus being at home is an unconscious process. On the contrary, being in an unfamiliar place unsettles us and makes us more aware of our surroundings, precisely because we do not know them. This idea of home as an unselfconscious process that happens in a familiar environment is closely linked to the idea of *roots*.

Home is implicitly constructed as a purified space of belonging in which the subject is too comfortable to question the limits or borders of her or his experience, indeed, where the subject is so at ease that she or he does not think (Ahmed, 1999: 339).

The subject does not think because, according to some environmental psychologists, the subject has "*develop(ed) a detailed cognitive knowledge of (his) environment*" (Inalhan and Finch, 2004: 123). From a Bourdeasian point of view, which tries to find the link between seemingly individual actions with the structure of the field where they take place, the agent feels at home because he is in a familiar habitat.

a given habitus is always enacted in a particular place and incorporates the regularities inherent in previous such places A particular place gives to habitus a familiar arena for its enactment and the lack of explicit awareness of that place as such, its very familiarity, only enhances its efficacy as a scene in which it is activated (Casey, 2001:410 cited in Easthope, 2004: 133).

In a sense, his habitus is reproducing the field where he is embedded because this same field is part of his habitus. One can think the contrary and say that when the subject is in an

unfamiliar setting his habitus becomes unsettled. In this logic, the journeys of migration do not only involve the splitting of the dimensions of home as the place from one comes from and the place where the everyday life happens. It also means that the field where the everyday life takes place is different from the field embedded in the subject's habitus.

Of course, in practice some places are more unfamiliar than others. This is related to an idea of the world as a "global tapestry" where some relations and practices stretch out from one place to the other and homes are made of *movement, communication, social relations which always stretch beyond from what is conceived as home* (Massey, 1994: 191).

In the case of Mexico and Spain there are a myriad of linking threads, which have been described throughout the work²²: both places are familiar and closely interconnected. One can think about this familiarity as a by-product of culture being detached from a bounded location.

According to Martin-Cook and Viladrich (2009) this familiarity is recognized by the Spanish state under the idea of a *subjectively believed community of descent' or origins*. Spanish policies towards its former colonies, including Mexico, are based on the belief of shared roots. In this sense, there is the idea that there is a "*state-transcending community of Hispanic nations and/or (b) descendants of recent Spanish emigrants to the Americas, Africa and Europe*" (Cook-Martin and Viladrich, 2009:153).

To what extent this familiarity helps Mexican middling migrants to feel at home in Spain, and more concretely in Madrid? I will explore this question by examining their relation with a new environment and the practices and habits that take place within it. It will be shown that the places where they felt comfortable in were in one way or another familiar. This sense of familiarity changed over time and it depended on them learning and understanding the logics behind certain habits and practices. This change over time will be shown through a seemingly inconspicuous difference: "the manners".

²² See, for example, the narrative on "The Mexican footsteps" at the beginning of the work.

9.2.1 Arriving in Madrid: Solitary contractuality

For the recently arrived, Spain was perceived as too familiar to feel "*as one is living abroad*". Most of them would have preferred to go to other places such as the United Kingdom, France or somewhere else in Europe to speak and learn other languages and to experience different cultures and ways of living. In many cases, Spain was not "exotic enough" for a long-term international experience.

Through the identification of similarities between the two places and the people who live in them, they experienced a sense of familiarity in the new place that was not achieved through a long period of residence, but the product of the constant exchange between many places.

If I could have chosen I think I would be in London, a little bit because of the language and a little bit because I like the city. I think it would have been a completely different experience because when I came to Madrid I immediately felt at home. It is just so similar to Guadalajara, just the language and architecture, the spaces. My friends say that Guadalajara is the Mexican city that looks the most like Madrid. [his hometown] (Bruno, S, student, 9 months).

Similar statements from people that were referring to their Mexican hometowns were found along the interviews, because like Guadalajara, many Mexican cities still preserve some colonial architecture. Coincidentally, a study about Spanish citizens living in Mexico City showed a preference towards the neighborhoods of the city that still "*keep part of the architectural heritage of the colony*" (Ortiz and Mendoza, 2008: 121). This familiarity was soon revalued. The newcomers would find out that indeed both places shared some distinctive features that reminded them of Mexico, but there also were some differences.

It is not that I don't like it, but I would prefer to learn a new language or speak something else than Spanish. This way I don't feel like being in Europe, for me the

idea of living in Europe implies speaking another language, and I speak Spanish at work. work... well they say I speak Mexican because sometimes they don't understand me (Eduardo, W, IT consultant, 7 months).

The statement above depicts an ambiguous familiarity: in broad terms, both places were similar but there were certain practices that produced a feeling of alienation. In general, this group was remarkably uncomfortable with the way in which social transactions took place in Madrid, and they perceived this lack of understanding as rudeness, these were: "the manners". Although they might seem inconspicuous, the subtle and not so subtle differences in the everyday practices in both places, constituted a source of alienation and uneasiness.

It all comes down to education, basic social skills. They are rude, very rude. Unpolite, uneducated, rude. It does not matter, education, sex, age, class, they are rude. If I am asking you a question, you are not supposed to yell at me. And if I say thank you, you say you are welcome... and if I say please, or good morning or whatever, you have to acknowledge the fact that I am being polite. You don't get to make fun of me or get annoyed because I am being polite (Paula, S, student, 7 months).

In addition to this feeling of alienation experienced in the public sphere, there was a lack of intimacy in the places where they dwelled, so their comfort zones were located in chain restaurants or coffee shops in touristic areas of the city. Such businesses share similar characteristics and standardized procedures, that somewhat dilute the particularities of the places where they are located.

I would ask every informant to choose a place to meet me, the only condition was that such place should make them feel comfortable and at ease. The binational chain Vips, was one of the favorite picks. It offered a wide variety of branches around the city, and it was a familiar setting since restaurants on both sides of the Atlantic have the same business model. Other

picks included global chains such as Starbucks, and some more picked local chains such as 100 Montaditos, Cafe y Té or Gambrinus, which all adopted an "Americanized" version of customer service.

This resonates with the idea of the non-places posted by Marc Augé (1995). In this context, being able to intermittently opt-out of interacting under the terms set by the values, beliefs and practices of the long-term residents of the city made them feel at ease. "Solitary contractuality" thus was perceived as familiar and comforting to the recently relocated since it offered homogenized practices and facilitated the interaction inside the locale. Being in a place where the interactions were marked by a standardized and somewhat predictable procedure, made them feel at ease in contrast to the frequently disconcerting experiences that they experienced in places where the interaction was set by the local social codes.

9.2.2 Re-evaluating their stay: The process of estrangement

People at this stage would make appointments in public places that held some meaning to them. The interviews took place in old neighborhood's cafes and terraces, park benches and other places where they would start the conversation by talking about the particular meaning that place had throughout their stay in the city. In this sense, one could tell that these people had a deeper connection to the city and to the people who lived on it. To a certain extent, the familiarity they had built in Madrid weakened their ability to relate to their former place of residence.

Although they all relocated to Madrid for a limited period, for them it was no longer a transitory place, and they started to re-evaluate Mexico as a place to live. Being away from Mexico and getting to know new places made them think about the things they liked and disliked about it. To a certain extent these things kept them from going back. For some it was an alienating routine, for others were the small town dynamics such as gossip and social censorship and for some more was the idea of "closeness" that was time and again identified as a feature of Mexican identity:

When you live in the place, you don't see certain things, but when you leave, you begin to realize. I realized that I had a love-hate relationship with Mexico. It's my love because my family is there, because I grew up there and I hate it because when you compare the place with other peoples and places you realize that there is something wrong. We are not very aware of many things, I don't like the Mexican character: they are hypocritical, and we are narrow-minded (Luis, S, researcher, 3 years).

In general, they all went through a process of estrangement from Mexico that allowed them to re-evaluate it as a place to live. This process of estrangement is described as the process through which home stops being an unselfconscious process and the attachments become re-evaluated. At the same time, they were starting to understand some of the dynamics of the city. Let's continue with the example of "the manners". What was interpreted as rudeness at a first glance, was later understood as a direct way to approach people. This simple realization, made their lives easier, and the feeling of alienation started to become a feeling of home.

I began to feel more at home like two years ago. It was a big cultural misunderstanding. I thought the Spanish had something against me, and they thought I was too whiney. I started to ask: are you mad at me or is it just the way you are? It is very easy to think they are rude because here, when they want a coffee they go like "Give me a coffee! How much?" and we are like "Hello! Good morning! Can I please have a little cup of coffee? Thank you very much, you are so kind" (Lucia, P, IT consultant, 4 years)

What happened instead, was that many of the habits they started to adopt from Madrid, were not well received in Mexico. They were starting to adopt some habits from Madrid, but at the same time they were starting to forget how things worked in Mexico. As a result, the

narratives of their first visits to Mexico were filled with misunderstandings and tensions, this was also explored in the chapter "From la Malinche to el Jamaicón: dispositions towards the other2.

You character changes, the first time I went back to Mexico, after year and a half, I was throwing things at my dad instead of handing them over to him... he was like: can you give me that book please? And I would go like paaaaas! (sound of something falling) and my dad was like: "what's wrong with you?" Suddenly you start to realize that it depends of where and with whom you are that you have to behave like what. (Clara, S, government representative, 5 years).

Moreover, they adopted certain things from Madrid that they wished to keep as part of their daily lives, independently of whether they wished to stay in Madrid, go back to Mexico, or move somewhere else. Altogether, this process of estrangement from Mexico and their experience in a different environment helped them to form a negotiated concept of what made them feel at home and more over what home should be.

9.2.3 From here and there: Acquiring a sense of place and understanding the collective contractuality.

The experiences of the people in this group resonate with the idea of acquiring a sense of place through a purposeful interaction with the place posted by geographer Yi Fu Tuan (1975). Let's recuperate Tuan's quote on the sense of place:

Sense of place is rarely acquired in passing. To know a place well requires long residence and deep involvement. It is possible to appreciate the visual qualities of a place with one short visit, but not how it smells on a frosty morning, how city sounds

reverberate across narrow streets to expire over the broad square, or how the pavement burns through gym shoe soles and melts bicycle tires in August (Tuan, 1975: 164).

The people in this group were not only familiarized with the dynamics and practices in the city, but actually understood the logics behind those particular practices. Understanding and adopting such logics would derive in an implicit acknowledgement of the collective forms of contractuality in the city, this in contrast with the predilection of the first group towards individual forms of contractuality that "non places" engendered. The most valuable lesson, the one who would help Mexicans feel more at home in the city was: Madrileans valued directness over politeness.

Mexicans are always shocked because the Spanish are very direct and for Spanish hate the fact that Mexicans are so cantinfleros²³. Ok a joke: So a Mexican comes to Madrid, and he wants to go to Tetuan metro station and he says "Hello very good morning I am so sorry to disturb you and make you lose your time but I would very much like to know where is Tetuan metro station" A Spanish person would say: WHAT DO YOU WANT?! And a Mexican person would just think: Wow is he rude, he didn't say please...(José, W, lawyer, 5 years)

The differences in practices and values went beyond the discussion around "the manners" and involved other aspects of the everyday life in Madrid. What was striking about their relationship with the city was that they enjoyed certain things that for the some of the people with less time were weird or uncomfortable. I will provide two examples regarding the enjoyment and appropriation of the public space, one is regarding the size of the dwellings and the other one has to do with the seasonal change.

²³ Wordy. They say many words without communicating much.

For the newcomers, the size of the houses was uncomfortable and unsettling. They were used to bigger spaces, and because of the generalized feeling of insecurity in Mexico they used the domestic sphere as their main site for recreational activities. In Madrid the dynamic was the opposite.

Everything has its pros and its cons, I like the fact that here they party outside, and that has to do with the spaces, since houses in general are tiny...as much as I like chilling out in someone's place I think it is nice that here you can appropriate the public space as well (Fernando, DN, publicist, 5 years)

While some of the people in the previous groups made fun of the fact that as soon as the temperature raised a bit they started to see a change in the behavior of the people, the ones who had been living for longer, it was not only a "normal" thing, but to a certain extent a source of joy.

Here, they are very aware of the seasonal change, they get weird, you start looking at them everywhere, just lying on the grass...and in Mexico we always have sun, for me is not a big deal... (Graciela, S, student, 7 months)

I like that you can really tell when is spring, back in Mexico we don't notice the good weather because it's always there. Here, in the summer, you start seeing all this umbrellas and everything is so festive and joyful (Cristina, P, entrepreneur, 6 years).

In this sense, it takes time and experience in a place to appreciate its own dynamics and to notice and enjoy the little changes. While Graciela's could not relate to the changes the locals experienced during spring or did not see the upside of having a small house, Cristina and Fernando learnt to appreciate these things as part of their everyday lives.

Thus, people in this group felt an immense affinity with the city: its physical setting, habits and routines and the social relations. They had achieved a sense of familiarity with the three aspects of a place that can engender a feeling of home:

I am very adapted to life in Madrid, to its rhythms, its tempo. I know where to find the people that make me feel good, I know where to look for the places where I am supposed to be in, I know which doors to knock to ask for a favor, and which doors I know that will not open. I know how to move around in many ways, and I feel at ease here (Carlos, A, performing artist/waiter, 11 years)

It will be developed further, but although people in this group could find some difficulties with identifying themselves as Spanish, even though many of them had the nationality, they had no problem with defining themselves as Madrilean.

9.2.4 Individual vs collective

To feel at home indeed implies having some familiarity. But as it has been shown, a familiarity achieved through a long and shared history does not always involve a feeling of home.

Madrid was perceived as familiar right from the beginning because of the shared history in and culture. But for the newcomers a feeling of home was achieved in places with little history and meaning. Those places, the "non places" which have been criticized by their lack of identity, were the ones that fostered some sense of comfort precisely because of their individual forms of contractuality.

For the in-betweeners Mexico was without a doubt a familiar place. They grew up there and spent most of their adult lives in the country. They knew the habits, the practices and to some extent the logic behind them. The distance from it allowed them to re-evaluate some aspects of it and at the end this familiarity became uncomfortable.

People with longer stays in the city had achieved a sense of familiarity that was built from knowing the place. This knowledge was gathered along their stay and it involved understanding the logic behind some practices and experiencing the place overtime.

In short, familiarity is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to feel at home in a place. More importantly, to feel at home such familiarity does not necessarily entail a deep and long shared history in a place.

9.3 HAVEN: THE INTIMATE PLACE OF BELONGING.



Gated community in Mexico City

The idea of home as haven, refers to two interrelated ideas: 1) a secure and safe place, physically and mentally, 2) a place of retreat, exclusivity and intimacy. The idea of home as a place of physical and mental security, was explored in the section "Gender: The nice Mexican girls".

The section described the way in which fear of physical harm and social scrutiny shaped the experiences of Mexican women in Madrid and Mexico.

This section will focus on home as haven by exploring the domestic sphere, conceived as a place of retreat, exclusivity and intimacy that is generally linked to the micro level of the house and family life. This idea of home relies on the separation between the public and the private sphere, which according to Davidoff and Hall (2002) emerge from the industrialization processes in the late 18th century (cf. Blunt and Dowling 2006:16). Industrialization, divided the place of home and work and this division produced a dualistic

conception of the main places of social reproduction:

| Home | Work |
|--------------|-------------|
| Femenine | Masculine |
| Private | Public |
| Domestic | Civic |
| Emotions | Rationality |
| Reproduction | Production |

(cf. Blunt and Dowling, 2006:17)

As the table shows, home as haven departed from a clearly gendered conception of place that relied on assumptions about heterosexual partnership and family life. In addition, it involved the ideals of a middle-class life where this separation between the roles of women and men were sustained because the economic survival of the family unit depended only on men, while women could focus on the domestic chores

Ideas of home become attached to physical structures we call dwellings, paying particular attention to an imaginary of home that casts the social relations of middle-class, white, heterosexual, nuclear families, and its material manifestation in the form of the detached suburban house, as an ideal, or homely, home (Blunt and Dowly, 2006:132)

Several works on home contest this middle-class, hetero-normative and gendered conception of home. As it was shown in the section "The Dark side of home", this idea of home as haven, as a place of retreat and security is highly contested. The work by Fortier (2003) on queer migrations shows that this idea of home is a function of heterosexuality that marginalizes queer identities. Manzo (2005) highlights the idea of home as a place of violence and

oppression for some women. Catarino and Oso (2000) show, in their research on the feminization of migration in Madrid and Lisbon, that the maintenance of this concept of home is highly dependent on a network of immigrant women, in a world where increasing numbers of (white) women are incorporating into the labor market.

In this section, I will show how the idea of home as haven changes with movement and how these changes are negotiated. In general, Mexico was associated with an idea of home that involved the reproduction of a gendered and hetero-normative idea of domesticity that was linked to a middle-class family life. In turn, by moving to Madrid, and because of the prices of the housing, they were living away from their families and with strangers. This was not only a something new: it was framed as an annoying and unsettling experience in every single case. Additionally the experience of migration had changed what was seen as the expected (hetero-normative) lifecycles: settling down, getting married and having offspring. In this sense, constructing a home as haven involved the return to Mexico to be able to keep with the "ideal" or in some cases it meant that they could construct homes under their own terms and at their own pace, this meant finding a place where they could freely express their identities: *a heaven*.

9.3.1 Arriving in Madrid: The place where I put my suitcase

With the move, they had lost the domestic and intimate aspect of home and were confronted with different forms of dwelling. While in Mexico they lived in the family household or had houses of their own, in Madrid most of them had to share apartments with other people, which were frequently people they had recently met. These were most of the time temporary arrangements, which unsettled their daily routines and forced them to live under different sets of rules and dynamics. The idea of the personal home as a place for relaxation, intimacy, and domesticity, was related to the places they had left, and their everyday experience in Madrid involved a search to rebuild some of these aspects of home.

...the first months I shared an apartment with a couple of Spanish guys, the ones I got were so boring. We were sharing the apartment, but in the living-room there were pictures of one of them and his family hanging on the walls and it was weird... the idea of sharing an apartment is well SHARING, I did not have any intimacy. And there were junkies sitting on my doorstep... (Diego, A, chef, 1 year).

The lives of the people in this group were marked by an acute residential instability and a continuous search for a place where they could feel comfortable and secure. It was not only about getting along with their roommates, but it also involved getting to know the different neighborhoods in the city and finding places they could enjoy.

The first two weeks I was really homesick, because I couldn't get a place and because I realized that this was not a holiday... My first place was in what I call the "Madrilenian Bronx". In spite of the fact that the area is not dangerous, the environment is really heavy. There is a huge community of people from the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, all the Latin American community and there are loads of drugs, and in general the ambience is heavy. Once you start thinking that every place is nicer than the place where you live, you have a problem. And that's what happened. I asked myself if Madrid is so pretty, why am I living here? (Andrés, S, student, 7 months).

Of course, achieving some sense of intimacy, particularly in an era of technological advancement, does not necessarily involve rebuilding the domestic sphere of home, but finding different ways to remain linked to it. There was the story of a young woman, let's call her the "Cyber Roommate", to whom I was not able to talk to because of "conflicting schedules". She was the roommate of one of my informants. What was particular about the

Cyber Roommate, was that she was able to keep some sense of intimacy and domesticity through the use of technology.

For my informant, the Cyber Roommate's habits were amusing, intriguing and alarming at the same time and were discussed at length during our reunions. Although she had been living in Madrid for six months, she had kept living on Mexican time, seven hours behind Madrid's time zone. She would wake up around mid-day Madrid, early morning in Mexico, would chat with her boyfriend and friends before they left to school or work and then she would chat with her mother. She would go to school at late afternoon and come back to the apartment just in time to chat some more with her boyfriend, during his lunch-break. Between her boyfriend's lunch-break and the time he left his office, she would do some necessary chores and then, on Madrid's late night- early morning she would chat some more. This example, fits the description of social interaction and modification of the meanings attached to place that Stephen Castles talked about in "Network Society". In the case of the Cyber Roommate, the place where she was physically located had little meaning and she was able not only to keep significant attachments to place through the Internet, but was structuring her everyday life around a place that was physically distant but close in time due to interconnection. To a certain extent the frequent use of technology prevented the splitting of home as the "everyday experience" and the "place of origin", and allowed the Cyber Roommate to keep her attachments bounded to one place in spite of the movement.

9.3.2 Re-evaluating the stay: Which path to follow?

The people in this group were starting to build some intimacy in the domestic sphere. Some were getting used to their roommates, some were planning to or recently moved in with friends or partners and a few more were able to live by themselves. The places where they dwelled started to be their homes and they were able to reshape the space according to their own taste and personality.

My home? It was my suitcase...I got used to make a home out of small things and now having like a home, an actual physical home is a novelty in my life... we went to IKEA to buy things and it was a special day in my life, like buying forks: forks of my own!...I mean I was getting used to arriving into someone else's home and just trying to insert myself as seamlessly as possible (Sofia, A, filmmaker, intermittent, last time 2 years).

Rebuilding the domestic aspect of home was related to a life stage and to certain values and priorities. While it was the people with steady salaries or living in a partnership, who could start to contemplate the idea of rebuilding the domestic sphere, single students and workers could keep on moving between houses for long periods of time,

I mean I don't see the point of going back to Mexico. Why should I go back? If I have to start from scratch I rather do it somewhere else. My friends are still there but they are living another life stage, they are having families and becoming fathers... and the thing is when I go to Mexico I feel old and here, here I am still a young dude and I might not want to start a family yet, or at all. Here I have met so many people that are jumping from one place to the other and Why not? I mean to live a life full of new experiences (Eduardo, W, IT consultant, 3 years).

This constant movement and change was experienced as liberating in some cases, while in others it derived in a nostalgic feeling that idealized Mexico as the place where they could build a home that reproduced tradition and a middle class identity.

I think that Mexico is a better place to settle down you can buy a house and pay for private schools for your kids, and the thing is here in Spain is more expensive, and kids don't have the same respect for authority (Francisco, W, business administrator, 4 years).

It was about having a middle class house and a family structure, but it also implied relying on certain goods and services that were related to the reproduction of middle class identity.

I would need a 6000 euro a month paycheck to get a house here. I cannot have a house like the one I had in Mexico, with a garden, maybe three bedrooms, I'm not asking for a big house, just a house with garden so I can have a dog and maybe two parking lots... not having a space problem and to having a maid and a gardener....(Clara, S, government representative, 5 years)

At an individual level this young middle class movers were trapped in the middle of a decision between freedom and movement, and fixity and stability.

9.3.3 From here and from there: the recovery of intimate places.

I got to see the homes of the people in this group. The people in the first group arranged our meetings in globally recognizable places (no-places) because they were not familiarized with the city and lived in share apartments where they did not feel comfortable enough to have visitors; the people in the second group were acting as tourist guides showing me the hidden secrets they had found about the city. The third group opened up the doors of their homes and offices for me. They were in long-term leases or paying mortgages and in a sense it could be said that they were materially well anchored in Madrid and had developed a sense of place, a feeling of belonging to Madrid through a long-term residence.

They had rebuilt the domestic and intimate aspects of their dwelling spaces and had, in transformed them into their homes. None of them were sharing their dwelling spaces with "strangers" and by doing so they were able to establish a degree of intimacy. Some of them lived alone, some others shared dwellings with close friends, family or partners. In some cases, rebuilding this intimate aspect of home also implied having a steadier anchor in

Madrid: getting married, forming a family and/or paying a mortgage. In some other cases, it involved changing their idea of what domesticity entailed,

(silence) My home is here. It is funny because I now say "my parent's house". Before I would never have said it, ever. My home is here and I suppose it was hard to have a home of my own, I don't share so I can leave it messy and I pick it up by myself. Yes, its mine because it was hard to have one, before I used to live with my boyfriend but then we broke up and I was the one who had to leave.. and this one is mine-mine, is the one I pay for each month and it has my plants (laughs) and where all my things are (Emma, S, researcher, 7 years).

For single people like Emma, home as haven became a place where they could retreat without the need of negotiating with family or partners. It did not involve the reproduction of gender roles and they felt at home precisely because of this: *I can leave it messy and I pick it up by myself.*

In general, people with longer stays in the city expressed a disassociation between their own stages in life and the one of their friends and relatives in Mexico. While many of their close friends were already married and starting to have children, this group of people had been more preoccupied with knowing new places, consolidating their careers, securing a stable migratory status in Spain or were simply more committed to a long-term project in Madrid. Here is what the people with longer stays in the city describe as the things that made them stay:

I don't like the way in which life in Mexico is supposed to be. I see that with my brother, he has the kids and the wifey, the fancy car and the four- bedroom house and (I find) his life asphyxiating (Helena, P, accountant, 7 years).

In this sense Madrid opened up new options to produce a feeling of home that did not necessarily involve this exact same path. Madrid was associated with a "*delay on the biological clock*", but also with freedom of choice.

Here you delay your biological clock, it is very difficult to start a family, and when I go to Mexico I realize that the lives and the experiences of women are bore. Here you can see a (single) woman in her 30's or 40's and she is welcomed, there she is a threat. They are embedded in a machista dynamic were they think every single woman is trying to steal their husbands...(Isabel, S, ex. assistant/entrepreneur, 4 years)

As it was mentioned at the beginning of the section, Mexico was conceived as the place where the particular idea of a home that reflected a middle class identity could be reproduced. While for some, having a family and living in a big(ger) house, with available private school and domestic service was considered an ideal, for some others it was "*asphyxiating*", a "*bore*" and made them "*feel old*". In these cases Madrid became a *heaven* where their identities as single, childless and relatively successful men and women were appreciated.

9.3.4 Re-producing vs re-inventing

The domestic sphere is the basic unit where certain schemes are re-produced. These are related to notions of continuity, intimacy, family, heteronormativity and traditional gender roles. For many this idea of home is the ideal, for others it is a place of oppression and imposition.

Movement unsettles this domestic sphere. Family units are disjointed and in some cases new ones are formed. Usually, family and intimacy are the things a sojourner will mention as the things he or she misses from home. But as Kaplan mentions (1999) there is a tension between *the liberating promise of mobility and the security of a fixed location*" (212).

It is through journeys of migration that people get to experience some freedom from local constraints and this derives in a re-evaluation of the things that constitute home. Some will get confirmation that, indeed, their ideal homes involve this continuity and re-production of traditional schemes. For some others, losing this local constraints involve realizing that constructing a home, an intimate space, involves distancing themselves from this re-production.

9.4 HEAVEN: TO FEEL PUBLICLY AND COLLECTIVELY AT HOME.

The idea of home as heaven talks about a public home where the subject feels free to express her or his public identity. It is related to the idea of a national identity, which is conceived as a belonging to an "imagined community". This idea has been explored at the level of the nation, but it has also shown some other aspects of identity formation. Throughout this work belonging and identity has been seen as a process of becoming instead of a state of being. It was shown how the native populations of America became Indians under colonial domination and how Mexican emigrants became traitors and then heroes. It was shown how third world citizens transited from being friends to foes in Spain. How La Malinche was an interpreter, a terrible mother and a cosmopolitan and how El Jamaicón transited from being the embodiment of the Mexican bravado to a pitiful figure (worth of understanding). Moving beyond the idea of a national identity, I also described the way in which other aspects of identity influence a feeling of belonging to a place. One of the main struggles of middling Mexicans is precisely to reproduce a middle class identity. For some women it was the ability of freely and independently be themselves regardless of their sex and the expectations around their gender. For some more, it involved that their lifestyles were respected.



Mexican Flag at Madrid's Gay Pride Parade.

As it was shown and imagined community is not necessarily confined to the borders of the nation-state, neither makes only reference to the idea of the nation: we belong to different imagined communities.

Let's think again about Fortier's (2003) work on queer migrations. Queer migrants leave home, conceived as the place where heterosexuality is reproduced and move to (collective) homes where their identities can be fully and publicly expressed: the imagined queer community. Duyvendak (2011) later on demonstrates how this same heavens where gays and lesbians can fully express their identity, can become enclosed and defensive communities.

The following section will describe how some Mexican middling migrants transited from having a strongly *rooted* notion of home, to a multi-located concept of home that was based on a *feeling of home light* (Duyvendak, 2011:122). This light form of attachment to place was aided, among other things, by the idea of Madrid as an open place, where the feeling of belonging was not established by a long and shared history, but by the intersection of many (hi)stories of migration. In this case, the recognition of a multiplicity of identities came into play in order to belong to a collective home. A new home as heaven.

9.4.1 Arriving in Spain: The rooted belongings

For this group their stay in Madrid was a period of enjoyment and getting to know the city through a newly found sense of freedom and security and forming a routine that helped them to find some structure in their lives. They dealt with strong feelings of nostalgia through activities that transported them back to their old home places. In general, they formed few

attachments to their new place of residency in the form of unsteady relationships with other foreigners. They all had a rooted concept of home. For some it derived in a strong feeling of nostalgia that would accelerate their return to Mexico, those were the prototypical Jamaicones. For the vast majority of them this concept would change over time,

At home never! The place where you born and you grow up is a milestone. I don't see how I could feel at home. It's difficult, you need your food, your same social life, your partner, your friends your habits. The insecurity, is a part of it, it's part of the things that make you feel at home. I feel different, but that does not imply I feel bad: I feel at ease. (Andres, S, student, 9 months).

Did I really say that? I guess what I meant was that those things were part of my daily life. It took me months to be able to walk on the street (in Madrid) without watching my back. I mean to be able to walk back home at three o'clock in the morning without fear is not a feeling you experience in Mexico (City) and I guess (at the beginning) it felt more like being in a movie than real life. (Andrés, S, consulate worker, 3 years)

In general and although there was a commonly held idea that their home was in Mexico, the majority was able to see some of the advantages of living in Madrid. The easiness they experienced was produced by the quality of the spaces and the way in which they were able to experience them. Although they also dealt with strong feelings of nostalgia, mainly because they missed their families and friends, they enjoyed living in the city and experiencing some sense of security and easiness to move around. For them, Madrid was also a temporary thing, they were more open to relate to the place and sought for relationships with other people to achieve some sense of homeliness.

Although one is able to *feel at home* in a new place through the execution of routines that are not necessarily place-specific, to feel like one belongs to a home-place is a more complex

process. As seen in throughout this chapter, a certain willingness to establish bonds with the new place is needed, but also it requires more time and experience in the place, the formation of fulfilling routines, a feeling of welcomness and close relations to people.

9.4.2 Re-evaluating their stay: The struggle to belong.

The newcomers experienced feeling of belonging to Mexico that was nurtured by the idea of going back. While most of the things that made them feel at home were related to their old home places and they regarded Madrid as a transitory space, this group had a more complicated relationship with both places.

On the one hand, while they felt they belonged to Mexico because it was the place where they were born and raised, they also had difficulties seeing it as a place to go back and live their daily lives. On the other hand, they felt as a part of Madrid because of their routines, groups of friends and relationships. At the same time, they experienced a feeling of alienation because there were some parts of their identity that were not being publicly recognized and embraced: they were talented extra-territorial Mexicans and as such, they needed recognition. The claim for recognition could take different shapes, from legal recognition, to the recognition of their level of skill or their socio-economic status.

In the case of the people who were seeking to stay in Madrid for an indefinite amount of time but had a student visa, there was a strong feeling of rejection due to their migratory statuses. This feeling of belonging and rejection was reflected on the location of their homes. The first statement, was made by a PhD student who had a scholarship sponsored by the Spanish government. The second was made by a part time student who was trying to make ends meet in Madrid.

My home is in Puente de Vallecas [neighborhood in the outskirts of the city], with my girl. I'm having the time of my life, I'm learning many things, I'm working at the lab

and I they like the way I work, right now I'm running all the experimental part of a joint project (Luis, S, researcher, 3 years)

I don't know. I feel divided. 50 /50? I feel good here because I'm independent, but I feel its also there (Mexico) because its part of me. Here I feel I have some restrains because of my visa, maybe I think that my home is a place where things are relatively easy: a place where the doors are open for me. Maybe if I had a job I would totally feel like part of the society, like more welcomed and integrated. I just keep on feeling a strong disadvantage because I'm a foreigner (Cecilia, S, student, 2 years)

The people who started to regard Madrid as home did not only have more stable migratory statuses but also felt that their jobs matched their level of skill. This was relatively rare and as it was shown in previous sections²⁴ it implied a re-negotiation of their expectations.

I think it is very difficult to come to terms with some things...I got my papers and I was working and it turned out that the cleaning lady, that was illegal (sic) was making more money ... I mean she worked a lot but at the end of the day this Mexican classism gets in the way and its confusing to see that a cleaning lady is earning more money than you (Cristina, P, entrepreneur, 6 years).

It was not only about legal recognition, but also about prestige and the reproduction of a middle class identity. At the end of the day for many Mexicans, relocating to Madrid indefinitely implied a loss of status either because they could not find jobs that matched their level of skill, houses that reflected their socio-economic status and/or hierarchical relations that could sustain their privilege. An important part of the public identity of some Mexicans in Madrid was not being recognized and therefore they could not regard Madrid as their

²⁴ Section "The renegotiation of privilege" and chapter "Channels of incorporation".

home. Others, had the ability and possibility of re-negotiating this recognition and were able to stay in the city, they would likely become elective belongers.

9.4.3 From here and from there: Elective belongings.

The main difference between this group and the previous ones, is that they were no longer trying to feel at home in Madrid, but were at home in Madrid and instead they were making a conscious effort to remain attached to Mexico. They had at least two homes: one in Madrid and one in Mexico.

The feeling of belonging to Madrid was facilitated by a re-negotiated concept of belonging that did not implied *strong roots* but what Duyvendak (2011) calls a "*feeling at home light*" (122). This light way of experiencing an attachment to place exists because there is an idea of the urban space that includes the newcomers. For this particular set of people, Madrid was conceived as an open place where the influx of people from inside and outside Spain, had somehow diluted the idea of a rooted belonging.

I am a little bit Madrilean. I think so since this idea of Spanishness is not very rooted, well everyone feels like they belong to their neighborhoods and there you have a community (Emma, S, researcher, 7 years).

I have this sensation of feeling from a place where I don't quite belong, like the Walker from the I-Ching. And the thing is, Madrid is filled with Walkers. I am Madrilean. I mean there are Madrileans-Madrileans and then the Walkers, the ones who chose to be from here (Amalia, W, researcher, intermittent, last time 4 years).

Not Madrilean, but maybe foreigner...I do identify with that. It makes me feel free I kind of love the fact that here everyone feels like a foreigner (Sofía, A, filmmaker, intermittent last time 2 years).

Throughout the years, the city has transited from being *"the provincial sleepy sister"* and to become a more dynamic and rapidly changing place. This has happened in great part because of the enormous influx of people from different backgrounds who are searching for a better or at least a new life. What makes them a community is precisely the feeling of not quite belonging. Call them foreigners, walkers or elective belongers, the fact is for many of them the question of belonging is not only answered by stating where they come from, but by thinking about where they have been, where are they now and where are they going.

Independently of whether they intended to stay in Madrid or not, they all made reference to the fact that they eventually realized that their home is where they were at the time, and expressed having a wide variety of attachments that ranged from paying a mortgage to wanting to raise their family there. This was the case of Isabel, who along the interview stated repeatedly that she was very nationalistic and that she was "in love with her country",

It's funny because I always say my home is in Mexico, but as the time passes by you realize that your home is where you live, here in Spain. I have my job and my doctors, you are rooted here, you pay taxes here, and my everyday life is here. (Isabel, S, ex. assistant/entrepreneur, 4 years)

This group was well anchored in Madrid in the sense that they were deeply familiarized with the place and overall, their daily lives were there. When they talked about their links to Madrid they talked about little that ranged from the very pragmatic: *"I pay taxes here"* or *"I have a job"*; to the more emotional ones such as: *"I like to be able to notice the arrival of the spring"* or *"I'm happy with my life here"*.

Although they felt their homes were in Madrid, sometimes they experienced feelings of nostalgia. Perhaps these feelings were even stronger than the ones experienced by the people from the other groups. They were no longer trying to achieve a sense of continuity or going through a process of detachment from their place of origin, but to varying degrees they

wished to keep their *roots*. They all identified Mexico as their home in terms of *roots*, this is to say: they felt Mexico was their point of origin and to a great extent derived part of their identity from the place.

I have one in Mexico and I have another one here. I don't like to think that I'm estranged from Mexico, for starters I grew up there, and all the good and the bad in me comes from there, I have my family there, its like MY place, and at the end of the day I feel more close to Mexicans... I mean, I can adapt very well but I feel more affinity with Mexico (Fernando, DN, publicist, 5 years)

This statement contains three of the main reasons why this group identified Mexico as their home in spite of the distance. The first one was this feeling of "being shaped and formed" by Mexico and thus deriving part of their identity from the place, the second the existence of strong bonds to people such as family, friends and/or lovers and the third, the idea of a long term residence in a place. They recognized Mexico as their home, but as time passed by this feeling was the product of a conscious effort.

People in steady relationships at this stage were generally involved in bi-national partnerships and for them home involved a negotiation to include Mexico as part of their everyday lives. These strategies included frequent visits, organizing parties with Mexican themes or even investing in the country.

My daughter was born here, but I insist that she is Mexican. So when she is at school tells everyone she is Mexican and her teacher told her that she is Mexican and Spanish. I mean I don't want my kids to be antisocial but I want them to know that they have a Spanish mom and a Mexican dad, and I want her to feel proud of it rejected (Hugo, S, lawyer, intermittent last time 7 years).

One of the examples of this conscious need to express the parts of their identity that were linked to Mexico was the accent. This was discussed on the chapter "Dispositions towards the other: From La Malinche to El Jamaicón", where adopting a "Spanish accent" was seen as an uncontroverted act of Malinchism and disdain of the Mexican roots. Keeping the accent at this stage was a conscious effort that was made by those who publicly wanted to *"remain being Mexican."*

In this sense,

9.5 ROOTS VS ROUTES

Forms of individual and collective of dwelling are inevitably affected by movement and change. The home places, of those who move but also of those who stay put, are constantly changing and transforming. What can be familiar and inspire feelings of home in one place and at a given point in time, changes not only from place to place, but also overtime.

Throughout this work I have argued in favor of a concept of place and thus home, that recognizes their open and ever changing character. History, culture and identity are made of a series of intersections that produce hybridity and cross-fertilization. This has been a constant through human history. Hanging into a closed and static idea of place, in Makki's words, blinds us from the multiplicity of attachments that people form to place. At the same time binding identities to particular territories negates the fact that identity is a process of becoming instead of a state of being: people, places and cultures change.

As it has been shown throughout this work, it is with movement (physical or imagined) and certain degree of openness that people get to negotiate a concept of belonging instead of experiencing it as given. Home it is not a matter of roots *versus* routes, but a question of roots *and* routes: who I am and who am I becoming.

People feel more at home in places where they are accepted. In the context of increasing mobility and change this acceptance entails that the self and the other have an open and fluid conception of identity, place and belonging. As it has been shown to feel at home in a place, people need to be able to freely express and (re) produce their various identities. At the same

time, to make Others feel at home, this expression has to come from an open and inclusive disposition. Otherwise, what is heaven for some becomes hell for others.

Home does entail a certain degree of exclusivity: who am I and who is the other, who is in and who is out. But as it has been seen through out the work constructing a home departing from a close process of differentiation produces a feeling of alienation in others. Instead, we are better off as communities by understanding and embracing the open and changing character of place.

AT HOME IN THE WORLD?

The ideas around movement, change and belonging, have dictated my academic interests and everyday life since I left Mexico. This investigation started with rosy glasses and a hopeful outlook on movement and change. I was under the impression that the world was the home of those who had the right capitals and disposition. As it has been shown throughout the work, having a rich array of capitals and an open disposition indeed matters. Certain parts of the world might be the playground of people with the right capitals and disposition, if they happen to arrive at the right time. This depends on a series of privileges and constraints that are related to the changing labor markets, the governmental and local attitudes on migration and the socio-economic and political climate of the time and places in which they transit. Places change and the stakes of the game change too, so does our concept of home.

This conclusion comes in two parts. In the first I broadly sketch some of the (modest) contributions of this work and in the second part, which is longer I develop new lines of research.

General conclusions

Throughout, the work I looked at the migration process as an over-arching home-making experience that related to questions of identity formation and (re)production at different scales. As a whole, it explored questions of belonging, agency, reproduction of structures and the meaning of place. This brought some light into the way in which homes are constructed, at an individual and collective level and in the context of a heightened interconnection and change.

There are two main conclusions. Places are open and changing. Because of this, narrowing down and closely linking the concept of belonging to a place-based identity obscures our understanding of the myriad of ways in which people relate to different places and ultimately

feel at home. In this particular case it was shown how the reproduction of a class-based identity weighted in the home-making process of middling migrants. There were also

Because of my particular position in the field I was able to see, understand and experience the values and practices of this community of Mexican middling migrants. Such experiences were marked by a tension with their new and old places of residence. There was a continuous tension between the idea of a rooted belonging and a negotiation with the routes found in Madrid.

These experiences were related to broader historical, economical and political processes that reach out these individual lived experiences. An internal form of colonialism, the governability of moving populations and a flexible market, unquestionably marked their home-making experiences within a transnational field. In more than one sense they were stuck in the middle.

They were the embodiment what the ideologues of post-revolutionary governmentality called "the cosmic race". They were the prototypical Mexicans, the *modern, developed (and) creative middle class (diplomat)*. Mexico, was their home.

At the level of the nation and within the logics of neoliberalism, they had to remain loyal to the nation while reaping out of the benefits of contemporary schemes of mobility. They were trapped between a narrow conception of belonging to the nation that deemed its moving populations as traitors and denizens, and at the same time, they were participating in contemporary schemes of human mobility.

As an extra-territorial community, this neoliberal governmentality infiltrated the everyday dynamics. To be able to feel at home within the community, they had to display a flexible disposition towards the outside that was neither overly open nor narrowly closed.

In Spain, they were liked. As foreigners they were positioned right in between the two poles of what constituted a friend or a foe. A friend, being the Eurostars, those citizens of the new borderless Europe and a foe, those third world citizens for whom the Mediterranean was re-bordered.

This middling position determined their migration and incorporation channels. They were neither overly privileged nor in a situation of need. Because of this middling position their home-making experiences became a balancing game in which they had to learn how to highlight or underplay certain aspects of their identity, and this was shown in relation to various scales.

As middle class actors the stakes of the game implied the reproduction of a middle class identity. Not being able to do so produce feelings of alienation and estrangement. It was at this point when the home-making strategies revealed to be diverse and ever-changing. The tension between a rooted belonging and the routes found in Madrid produced a fragmentation of their belongings and the home-making process became a constant negotiation. Some differences were identified along the lines of gender, conceptions around class, lifestyle and opportunities.

It was relative and moreover, it changed overtime. Newcomers, in-betweeners and long time residents had different concepts of home and home making strategies, that were different depending on the scale: the body, the household and the community.

It became clear that home can be located in the past and in the present, where you were and where you are now. In those situations the feeling of home was created by the story telling and the every-day life. But home was also about the future: where are you going and where do you want to be. In that situation the feeling of home is about becoming who you want to be.

New lines of research

In the last six years many things have happened. Throughout those years my country, our country, entered a "war against drugs" that submerged it under what it seems to be an unwavering flash of violence, and in 2008 the world started to witness one of the worst economic crisis since 1929.

Spain soon became the subject of newspaper's headlines that were warning the world of the impacts of this global economic crisis. In early 2011, I was at Agencia EFE (the main Spanish

news outlet) the day it was announced that over twenty five hundred workers related to the communication's industry were about to lose their jobs. Within the next few days, American Express was also shutting down some of its Madrilean offices and sending many of its employees to South America, England or just right into the street.

In the last several months, I helped to pack the bags of many of my informants, close friends and loved ones, who were leaving the city because the doors which once seemed open, were closing one by one. Madrid, the city I grew to love, was starting to empty.

With this intensified interconnection product of globalization what happens here has direct impact on what goes on there: the war on drugs, the economic crisis, the global re-structuring. Places are indeed open and interconnected and we live in a global tapestry. Pull one thread and the fabric will immediately change in the opposite side. As individual agents it seems we have little control over these things and at the same time we become painfully aware of the fact that change is the only constant.

Over the course of this research, I saw how the stakes of the game began to change and how individual agents started to adjust accordingly. My first interviews were filled with the stories of people who just chose to stay in Madrid and, for example, were able to easily change their migratory statuses from students to workers. Those were the days. They were the ones who opened up businesses and were starting to make a career. Then the law changed and the trajectories of the people who arrived after 2004 became more predictable. Most of them had a rich array of capitals and an open disposition, but were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

As this was happening, I kept on doing my daily review of newspapers and without even trying a number of new questions arose. I left them for the conclusions.

On March 2011, CNN Mexico published a note on under the headline: *"The number of Mexican migrants that leave the U.S to go back to their home increases"*²⁵. Two months later, a Spanish newspaper published an article inviting Spanish to *"Come back to Latin America*

²⁵ Ximénez (2011, May 30th) Vente otra vez a Latinoamérica, Pepe. *El País*. Retrieved from <http://www.elpais.com>

again, Pepe"²⁶. It argued that America is a mainly Spanish-speaking continent where many things are yet to be done and that in Spain there is an entire generation of qualified youngsters that are trapped in an agonizing economy. Before proceeding to quote the experiences of young Spanish working in Mexico the article stated that: *You go to Germany to get a job, but in an environment that is as static as in Spain. To Mexico or Colombia you go to grow.* On May 2012, a Mexican newspaper published another article with the title *"Inverse brain-drain, back home"*²⁷. They explain that in the last few years the United States and Great Britain have registered *"massive exits of outstanding immigrants embedded in academia, towards nations such as China and India, and to a lesser extent Brasil, Rusia and Australia, who are going back to their countries of origin searching for new opportunities"*.

It appears that the news are pointing out to a cycle of brain-circulation and return migration, that is heightened under the current conditions of financial crisis and apparent re-accommodation of global fluxes of capital. This neoliberal machinery, that pushes for flexibility and movement is still at work not in spite of the crisis, but because of it. And there they go, the middling migrants, trying to reproduce a middle class identity, looking for jobs that match their level of skill and places that fulfill their expectations. They are searching for new places to call home or just going back to a familiar one. And I wonder: How substantial is this (new and return) migration? and more importantly, how it will change Mexico?

My partner, who went back to Mexico nine months ago, tells me he is experiencing the *"reverse Jamaicón syndrome"*. He misses Madrid and feels completely out of place in Mexico. His, is one of the many voices in the country that are asking for a change. I know the feeling. Some of my informants who have gone back to Mexico still talk about how much they miss Madrid and how, some of them, are planning to move elsewhere. One more sent an e-mail to tell me that "100 montaditos" the Spanish chain restaurant that made him feel at home when he arrived in Madrid, just opened up a branch in Mexico City. He was incredibly excited about it.

²⁶ Romo (2011, March 4th) El número de migrantes mexicanos que regresa de EU a su hogar aumenta. *CNN-México*. Retrieved from <http://www.mexico.cnn.com>

²⁷ Navarro (2012, May 20th) Fuga de cerebros a la inversa, regreso a casa. *Excelsior*. Retrieved from <http://www.excelsior.com.mx>

If I have a firm conclusion about the way in which movement changes individual and collective forms of dwelling is that it forces individuals and collectivities to rethink their notions around place, belonging and home. Independently of whether or not, people go back to their countries of origin, they have a more critical perspective on it. Change and movement forces people and communities to see these things outside the comfort of a familiar and unselfconscious feeling of home

To what degree we can predict the outcome of those changes? I am not sure. It can derive in reactionary attitudes like the ones Duyevendak (2011) describes in the Netherlands, where some are hanging to a thick notion of belonging that includes roots, a long history and understanding of the place under certain terms. Or it can derive in a sense of community, a heaven, made up of fractured belongings just as it happens with the Madrid that Mexicans and other groups of newcomers experience in the city.

At this point I am just speculating, I know that a couple of e-mails and some newspaper reports are not enough evidence, but bear with me. Let's imagine for the next few paragraphs that some of these reports and perceptions are accurate: that many Mexicans are returning from abroad and that some newcomers are arriving into the country.

We have seen the way in which the collective home of Mexicans has been constructed throughout its history. Under ideas of sovereignty, independence and freedom, the project of construction of national identity presented, at least discursively, an imagined community that was bounded, cohesive and firmly rooted on Mexican soil. Mexico was the heaven of the "cosmic race" but to belong one had to stay put and renounce to express any attachment to other places and times.

As an imagined community, Mexicans at home and abroad, have shifting dispositions towards the Other. How many words are there to describe them (us)? malinches and jamaicones; traitors and heroes; cholos and pochos; gringos and gachupines²⁸. All of them, to varying degrees, have fractured senses of belonging. And this research indicates that once that breaks it never returns to its original shape.

²⁸ Pejorative terms to refer to U.S-Americans and Spanish.

On the one hand, if we look back about the effects that the influx of foreigners had in the country during the Porfirian era, things look gloomy. During the Porfirian era, the idea was that the attraction of (white) immigrants, with economic and cultural capital would bring order and progress and this policy just deepened the ethno-racial stratification.

On the other hand, this hypothetical new influx of people is comprised of Mexicans who have fractured belongings. After all, in the neoliberal era, the state has displayed its ideological machinery to ensure loyalty to the nation and a flexible disposition. Additionally, this influx appears to be from below and from the middle. Will they be treated as traitors or as heroes?

In this hypothetical situation there are many options. There might be an outlash and this deeply rooted and fairly closed idea of belonging might get stronger and defensive, particularly in the context of an economic crisis. Other option is that this new influx of people might change the stakes of the game and that having a fractured belonging will become some sort of symbolic capital. There are some studies on return and middling migration that point out towards this option (in the back of my head I just have Goldring). A third option, is that this new influx might foster open attitudes and perhaps allow some change in attitude. Perhaps, we can expect that women and men will feel free to be themselves, that classist and racist attitudes will be at least tempered and the community will start to embrace difference.

What is clear, and I am paraphrasing Doreen Massey to conclude, is that communities would benefit if they looked at questions of home and belonging from an open and outwards perspective that acknowledges the fact that we live in a global tapestry.

ANNEX I. Summary of interviews

Who are those middling migrants and what happened to them? They are grouped according to the migration channel and there is some additional information: Year of birth, current occupation, year of arrival- departure, and where they are now or what are their plans.

Students

Paula (1984, Business Administrator, 2007-2009) had a boyfriend in Mexico and went back when she finished her studies.

Graciela (1977, Public Policy Maker, 2007-2009) went back to Mexico after finishing her studies. Was married to:

Juan (1975, Public Policy Maker, 2007-2009) went back to Mexico.

Ana (1976, Psychologist, 2001-2003/ 2004-2009) she is currently in Mexico.

Cecilia (1981, Psychologist, 2006-2009) worked as a tour guide to pay for her studies, went back to Mexico.

Bruno (1979, Government worker, 2007-2008) had a Mexican girlfriend and went back to Mexico. They recently got married.

Luis (1980, Researcher, 2005-2010) got married to a Spanish women, went back to Mexico. Wants to go back to Madrid, but *things are rough*.

Emma (1979, Researcher, 2004-2011) moved to France and is waiting for things to get better in Spain, although she might go to Germany. She wants me to *stop asking silly questions!*

María (1980, IT Consultant, 2007-) after years of struggle she *finally got a working permit*. She spends most of her vacations in Mexico.

Sebastián (1983, Consulate worker, 2006-) got a job at the consulate through friends of friends. Thinking about marrying his Spanish girlfriend.

Andrés (1984, Lawyer, 2007-) last time I checked he was working at the consulate. Got the job through friends.

Clara (1977, Government representative, 2003-2009) worked as the liaison for a local government. Got the job through family friends. Moved with Spanish husband to Italy.

Elvira (1978, Government representative, 2004-) works as the liaison between a Mexican local government and Spain. Married to Spanish man.

Isabel (1977, Executive assistant/Real State Broker, 2003-) got married to her Spanish boyfriend.

Hugo (1967, Lawyer, 1998-2002/2004-) went to Salamanca as a student, lived two years in Vienna as an intern and finally relocated in Madrid. Is married to Spanish woman and has one daughter. His Law Firm is still growing.

Workers

Julio (Worker, 1969, Journalist, 2007-) is still waiting to go back to Mexico.

Javier (Worker, 1966, Architect, 2005-) lives with Spanish girlfriend. Spends most of his time working in Mexico.

Francisco (1981, business administrator, 2007-) plans to go back to Mexico.

Eduardo (Worker, 1981, IT Consultant, 2007-) did postgraduate studies in Italy and was *addicted to change*. He might move again.

Ernesto (Worker, 1967, Journalist/Restaurant owner, 2004-) was born in Argentina, did postgraduate degree in the U.S. His company might relocate him elsewhere.

Mariana (1975, Business Administrator, 2008-) moved in with Spanish boyfriend. Was trying to ask for dual nationality through the Ley de memoria histórica.

Amalia (1973, Researcher, 1996-00/ 2008-) first lived in Madrid as a student went back to Mexico and then worked in England. Now she lives in Madrid again and wants her mother to move to Spain.

José (1983, Lawyer, 2005-) has a Mexican girlfriend. Plans to *never go back to Mexico*.

Partners

Iris (Partner, 1980, Housewife, 2007-08) wife of a Mexican transferee moved to Venezuela after one year and then went back to Mexico.

Lucía (Partner, 1975, IT Consultant, 2004-) is still with her Spanish husband and had a baby.

Cristina (Partner, 1975, Interior Decorator/Entrepreneur, 2002-) is with her Spanish boyfriend.

Helena (1977, Accountant, 2003-) is waiting for her divorce to finalize.

Dual Nationals

Fernando (Dual National, 1984, Publicist, 2003-) recently got married to Mexican girlfriend, thinking about going back to Mexico.

Marco (Dual National, 1981, Journalist, 2004-) is currently with pregnant Argentinean wife.

Jimena (1973, Accountant, 2006-) plans to live in Madrid: *Forever!*

Adventurers

Diego (Adventurer, 1983, Chef, 2007-10) fell in love with a Spanish woman, the restaurant where he worked closed in 2009. Went back to Mexico. He said he rather *eat than cook*.

Sofia (Adventurer, 1979, Filmmaker, 1997-00/ 2008-) lived in Madrid when she was younger, then moved to India, Mexico and Cuba, just got married in Madrid. Plans to go back to Mexico with her brand new husband.

Carlos (Adventurer, 1977, Performing Artist/waiter, 2000-) has two kids with his Mexican wife. Plans to go back to Mexico.

Antonio (Adventurer, 1971, Restaurant manager/entrepreneur, 1995-) has a son, he plans to stay in Madrid.

Annex II

Las huellas mexicanas en Madrid

Las imágenes del México contemporáneo están retratadas en los medios masivos de comunicación. De pronto, las paredes de Madrid están tapizadas con pósters de los Tigres del Norte, una banda de música tradicional que en México sólo escuchaba cuando tomaba el autobús.. Los canales locales transmiten imágenes familiares de telenovelas ridículas que mi abuelo estaría viendo en México. Sus periódicos reportan las noticias de México, como si lo que está pasando en mi país también les importara a ellos.

En la Plaza de España, hay un póster enorme de Chichen Itzá, que invita a los turistas a visitar el país diciendo que "Hay muchos Méxicos, Descubre el tuyo". Comenzamos a caminar de regreso a casa y en una de las aceras de la Gran Vía hay un bolero puliendo zapatos. "Bolero" es la palabra usada en México para describir a una persona que se gana la vida puliendo zapatos y botas, el resto del mundo los conoce como limpiabotas. Si algún día caminas por la Gran Vía no sólo verás a un bolero mexicano, verás "Al mejor bolero mexicano en España".

Llegamos a Sol, en el corazón de Madrid, y cruzamos la plaza que marca el kilómetro cero. La canción "México lindo y querido" resuena en la plaza y veo a un grupo de personas rodeando a una banda de mariachis. Están cantando, la que probablemente es una de las canciones más sentidas acerca de México. Le explican al público, con voces graves y profundas, que si llegasen a morir lejos de México es mejor que pretendan que están dormidos hasta que los regresen a casa. Mi pareja me dice medio en broma que los miembros de la banda son del Ecuador y ahí mismo, escucho por primera vez algo que de ahí en adelante escucharé durante mi estancia en Madrid: Por lo general, los Mexicanos aquí son estudiantes de posgrado y profesionistas.

Caminamos por Carrera de San Jerónimo, intentando llegar a su casa. De pronto, nos encontramos con un grupo de policías que bloquean el tránsito. *Algo debe de estar pasando en el congreso*, me dice mi pareja y continua caminando para acercase a un policía.

-Vamos a la embajada mexicana. (Ah, ¿sí?)

Y el policía nos deja pasar. Estoy impresionada. Seguimos caminando entre policías y guardaespaldas, y entretanto mi pareja me trata de decir algo sobre el congreso. *Si, si. ¿En dónde está la embajada mexicana?* le pregunto.

La embajada mexicana está localizada justo enfrente del congreso, entre la "tienda del congreso" y un banco. Está ahí, justo entre los edificios que albergan el poder legislativo español, en el corazón de la ciudad y lejos de los lugares en donde las embajadas están usualmente. Puede que sea mi imaginación, pero me quedo con la impresión de que el gobierno mexicano tiene un interés particular en España.

¿Quiénes son estos mexicanos y por qué están en Madrid? ¿Porque este lugar se siente como México? Esas, son las primeras de las muchas preguntas que me he hecho a lo largo del trabajo.

Introducción

¿Que significa sentirse como en casa en un mundo globalizado? ¿Cómo el movimiento y el cambio afectan las formas individuales y colectivas de morar? Estas preguntas toman pertinencia en el contexto de la globalización en donde conceptos tradicionales como "en casa/y lejos de casa" y el yo y el otro están siendo constantemente desafiados no sólo en las comunidades que los antropólogos estudian, sino dentro de la disciplina misma.

Algunos de nosotros hemos leído y reproducido hasta el hartazgo la famosa cita de Edward Said a cerca del mundo experimentando una "condición generalizada de desarraigo" para

abrir discusiones sobre desplazamientos. Es una buena cita que nos hace empáticos hacia las aflicciones de los refugiados, exiliados y asilados ¿Que sentirías si te echaran de tu casa?

En nuestras vidas diarias puede que hayamos visto o escuchado cosas que utilizan el concepto de casa u hogar para enviar un mensaje. Desde los productos en los pasillos de los supermercados que dicen ser "hogareños o caseros" y prometen una receta de antaño que los hace distinguirse de los productos genéricos en el mismo pasillo; hasta un grafiti pintado en la calle que le exige a los extranjeros que "¡regresen sus casas!" dando a entender que sus casas están en algún otro lado, no aquí. Puede que hayamos escuchado el discurso público de un político que promete "limpiar la casa", la casa colectiva, tal vez de la corrupción o de manera mas inquietante de los "indeseables". Probablemente hemos escuchado la voz de un ser querido pidiéndonos que "regresemos a casa" independientemente de si estamos a quince minutos o a quince horas de ella. Podríamos ser los que decimos, escribimos y compramos esas cosas. Parecería que en nuestros tiempos, la casa está en todos lados, solo que para algunos casa ya no es aquí.

Desde la perspectiva de un investigador, mas aún, desde la perspectiva de un antropólogo, tener un tema al que la gente siente cercana es bueno. Después de todo nos interesa saber lo que la gente tiene que decir acerca de sus vidas. Pero investigar un tema que está en boca de todos puede causar sospecha: ¿Es demasiado ordinario? ¿Está demasiado politizado? ¿Vale la pena? Bueno, la respuesta es sí, a todas las preguntas.

El tema de la casa es ordinario porque es parte de la vida diaria y ha sido politizado precisamente porque sin necesidad decirlo en voz alta resuena con la idea de pertenencia y lugar: quien pertenece aquí y quien no. Vale la pena precisamente porque impacta la vida de muchas personas y necesita ser recuperado. Esto, porque parece que por lo menos en la arena pública ha sido co-optado por discursos esencialistas, reaccionarios y excluyentes que parecen querer enviar a todos de regreso a las casas que "les corresponden": a las mujeres a la esfera doméstica porque no pertenecen a los lugares de trabajo; a los sujetos poscoloniales de regreso a la periferia porque no pertenecen a las casas colectivas en el centro; a las

identidades sexuales no normativas a la hetero-normatividad porque sus prácticas están fuera de lugar, y demás.

Este trabajo explora la intersección entre el movimiento, el lugar y pertenencia, nivel individual y colectivo, y la forma en que esto cambia a través del tiempo. Utiliza una perspectiva transnacional, que problematiza las asociaciones tradicionales de la casa u hogar con fijeza y estabilidad. En concreto, este trabajo explora el proceso migratorio como una "experiencia global de construcción de casa/hogar", a través de las experiencias cotidianas de los migrantes "de en medio" y está escrito en el contexto de la movilidad geográfica de una clase media, que está utilizando la migración internacional como una estrategia para mejorar sus condiciones de vida. La movilidad en este contexto puede ser utilizada como "estrategia de salida" de condiciones alienantes en sus propios países, piensa en los jubilados en la Costa del Sol o de (algunas) las migraciones gay. Pero también puede ser utilizado como una estrategia de reproducción de clase en un mundo donde los medios tradicionales de distinción, como la educación secundaria y terciaria, se están difuminando.

Como investigadora mexicana en Madrid, estoy aprovechando mi inserción dentro de una comunidad en particular de inmigrantes en Madrid. Aunque la comunidad mexicana en la ciudad es bastante pequeña, algunas de sus características la convierten en un objeto de estudio interesante. Debido a que tienen un origen predominantemente de clase media, no se les puede enmarcar como emigrantes económicos o de élite. En este sentido, el estudio también explora las experiencias de los actores "de en medio" en un contexto transnacional.

El trabajo parte de un concepto abierto de casa y lugar que permite localizar a los viajes y las "experiencia de construcción de casa u hogar" los actores de "en medio" en diferentes escalas. Mediante la adopción de una lente transnacional, el análisis incluye el papel del Estado-nación en lo que tradicionalmente se enmarca como una experiencia privada e individual de pertenencia: las experiencias de la construcción de casa. En este sentido, el trabajo refleja cómo los actores se inscriben en un proceso de globalización, caracterizado por la flexibilidad de movimiento de capital, información, bienes y personas.

La tesis, por lo tanto, está orientada a buscar en el proceso de la migración como una "experiencia global de construcción de casa" que tiene que ver con cuestiones de formación de identidad y reproducción a distintas escalas. Se parte de la comprensión de las experiencias vividas por los actores "de en medio": la forma en que experimentan el lugar, cómo estructuran su presencia en los ámbitos público y privado y cómo sus viajes personales se caracterizan por un conjunto de privilegios, restricciones y valores.

En el capítulo 1, "Convirtiéndome en una antropóloga (nativa)", describo mi propia posición cambiante en el campo. Este capítulo ayuda a situar la investigación dentro de debates mas amplios dentro de la antropología sobre la esencia misma de la disciplina en un contexto de rápidos cambios socio-culturales, especialmente para aquellos cuyo sentido de pertenencia difumina la distinción entre "en casa y lejos de ella" en la que la se fundó convencionalmente experiencia etnográfica y de trabajo de campo. Proporciona un punto de partida para discutir el contexto en el que se lleva a cabo esta investigación: ¿quién es la población que se está estudiando, cómo y por qué?.

Capítulo 2, "El contexto del estudio" proporciona una visión general de la migración mexicana en España. Se inicia con una revisión del contexto histórico, económico y social en que esta migración se lleva a cabo, y es seguida por una revisión de su perfil demográfico. Se describe el modo en que la relación entre ambos países ha cambiado en el contexto del neoliberalismo y la forma en que la acumulación de capital económico marca esta relación de una manera muy sustancial.

Capítulo 3, "Casa", analiza el debate contemporáneo en torno a su lugar, la identidad y pertenencia. Se inicia con la problematización del concepto de casa que nos permite entender más allá de estas nociones de fijeza y estabilidad. En su conjunto, este capítulo establece el tono para el resto del trabajo. Se explora la relación entre el lugar y las diferentes escalas de pertenencia en el contexto de una mayor interconexión y cambio. En este sentido, "la experiencia de construcción de casa/hogar" es visto como un fenómeno de múltiples capas y múltiples escalas que permite la exploración de las diferentes escalas de pertenencia en la experiencia de la migración.

En el capítulo 4 "Caja de herramientas conceptuales para el estudio de la casa (lejos de casa)", explico los objetivos teóricos y categorías que guían el trabajo. Uso el concepto de campo social transnacional con el fin de explorar un fenómeno de múltiples capas y múltiples escalas como la "construcción de casa/hogar" en el contexto de la movilidad. En este campo social transnacional, lo que está en juego para los actores que ocupan posiciones de "en medio" es fijado por la necesidad de reproducir una identidad de clase media. Esta reproducción está conformada por una serie de privilegios y restricciones que están relacionadas con la flexibilidad del mercado y la gobernabilidad de la poblaciones en movimiento.

Capítulo 5, "Nuestra casa: las raíces y los rumbos de la identidad mexicana", explora la forma en que se construyó la casa colectiva de los mexicanos. Contiene un enfoque histórico que traza la estratificación étnica y racial derivada de la época colonial y que penetra las "estrategias de construcción de casa u hogar" a nivel individual. Dicha construcción se caracteriza por un proceso de diferenciación constante de la otra en términos muy específicos. En general, se pone en evidencia una forma de colonialismo interno que marca las experiencias en torno a la "construcción de casa" tanto de mexicanos en el país y como lejos de el.

En el capítulo 6 "Los canales de migración: de traidores a héroes, de amigos y enemigos" continua con el análisis observando la forma en que la pertenencia a la nación fue reformulado en el contexto del neoliberalismo. Dentro de la lógica de la acumulación capitalista, los actores transnacionales "de en medio", se convierten en actores clave en el posicionamiento del país dentro de la reconfiguración de los vectores geopolíticos y económicos de poder. Se inicia la introducción de mis informantes a través de una clasificación de los motivos de la reubicación y los canales de migración.

El Capítulo 7, "Canales de incorporación", continúa con la descripción de la relación entre mis informantes y Madrid, mirando su incorporación al mercado laboral local. Esta parte del trabajo se describe cómo los mexicanos "de en medio" en Madrid participan en un acto de equilibrio entre permanecer leal a la nación y tomar ventaja de las condiciones actuales de movilidad y flexibilidad. En el contexto de la migración "de en medio" las "estrategias de

construcción de casa" se caracterizan por una necesidad de reproducir una identidad de clase media. Dicha necesidad se refleja en las estrategias de inserción en el mercado laboral de la ciudad y la forma en que se configura esta incorporación a través de un sentido de pertenencia fracturado.

En el capítulo 8 "Disposiciones hacia el exterior: de la Malinche a el Jamaicón" sigo la tensión entre una definición restringida de pertenencia al nación-Estado frente a la necesidad de disposiciones flexibles hacia el exterior. Uso del mito en el sentido antropológico para explorar cómo esta tensión da forma a la relación de los migrantes mexicanos "de en medio" con el exterior. Este capítulo pone de relieve el desafío permanente a la idea de una pertenencia arraigada y una negociación con las rutas que se encuentran en Madrid. Y explora la forma en que las limitaciones estructurales y privilegios que dan forma a estas disposiciones.

El capítulo final de este trabajo es el capítulo 9 "La construcción de casa a través del tiempo", intenta responder a la pregunta: ¿Cómo el movimiento y el cambio afectan las formas individuales y colectivas de morar? El análisis general es atado al proporcionar una visión general de las experiencias individuales de "construcción de casa" en tres niveles: el cuerpo, el hogar y la comunidad. Se muestra cómo este proceso está marcado por una tensión entre dos lugares y los sentimientos ambivalentes que producen.

Entonces, este trabajo se trata de los lugares especiales en nuestra vida diaria que parecen estar en boca de todos, algunas veces para excluir y alienar y otras veces para incluir y hacernos sentir... como en casa. No se trata mucho de lo que se está argumentando a favor, sino de lo que se está argumentando en contra que es la premisa básica y comúnmente aceptada de que las identidades y los lugares son fijos y que de alguna forma nuestros propios sentimientos de pertenencia nos dan el derecho de negárselos a otros.

¿En casa, en el mundo?

Las ideas en torno al movimiento, el cambio y la pertenencia, han dictado mis intereses académicos y mi vida diaria desde que salí de México. Esta investigación se inició con unas gafas de color de rosa, con una visión muy positiva sobre el movimiento y el cambio. Tenía la impresión de que el mundo era la casa/hogar de los que tenían los capitales y la disposición adecuados. Como se ha demostrado a lo largo del trabajo, poseer una rica variedad de capitales y tener una disposición abierta importa. Ciertas partes del mundo podrían ser la casa de algunas personas con los capitales y la disposición adecuadas, si, por casualidad llegan en el momento adecuado. Esto depende de una serie de privilegios y restricciones que están relacionadas con los cambios en los mercados laborales, las actitudes gubernamentales y locales en materia de migración y el clima socio-económico y político de la época y los lugares en los que se transita. Los lugares cambian y de las apuestas del juego cambian también.

Esta conclusión está dividida en dos partes. En la primera esbozo en términos generales algunas de las (modestas) contribuciones que hace este trabajo y en la segunda parte, que es mas larga desarrollo nuevas líneas de investigación.

Las aportaciones

A lo largo del trabajo miré el proceso de la migración como una "experiencia global de construcción de casa/hogar", que está relacionado con cuestiones de formación identitaria y de reproducción en diferentes escalas. En su conjunto, se exploraron cuestiones de pertenencia, agencia, reproducción de estructuras y el sentido de lugar. Esto ilustró la forma en que se construyen casas, a nivel individual y colectivo, y en el contexto de una mayor interconexión y cambio.

Debido a mi posición particular en el campo tuve la oportunidad de ver, entender y experimentar los valores y las prácticas de esta comunidad de migrantes mexicanos "de en medio". Tales experiencias se caracterizaron por una tensión entre los nuevos y viejos lugares de residencia. En Madrid, salieron a la luz cuestiones relacionadas con la historia, identidad y

pertenencia. Existe una tensión continua entre una idea de pertenencia arraigada y una negociación con las rutas que se encuentran. Estas cuestiones se relacionan con procesos más amplios de carácter histórico, económico y político que sobrepasan estas vivencias individuales. Una forma interna de colonialismo, la gobernabilidad de las poblaciones móviles y un mercado flexible, sin duda marcaron las "estrategias de construcción de casa" en un campo transnacional. En más de un sentido, están atrapados en el medio.

Esta posición intermedia determinó la migración y los canales de incorporación. No eran ni excesivamente privilegiados, ni estaban en una situación de necesidad. Debido a esta posición intermedia sus experiencias de "construcción de casa" se convirtieron en un "juego de equilibrio" en el que tuvieron que aprender a resaltar o minimizar ciertos aspectos de su identidad, y esto se muestra en relación con varias escalas.

A nivel de la nación y dentro de la lógica del neoliberalismo, tenían que permanecer leales a la nación, al tiempo que cosechaban de los beneficios de los esquemas actuales de movilidad. Estaban atrapados entre una concepción estrecha de pertenencia a la nación que considera las poblaciones móviles como traidoras y al mismo tiempo, estaban participando en los esquemas actuales de la movilidad humana. Esta gobernabilidad neoliberal se infiltró en las dinámicas cotidianas de la comunidad. Para poder sentirse como en casa dentro de la comunidad, tenían que mostrar una actitud flexible hacia el exterior.

Como actores de la clase media de las apuestas del juego implica la reproducción de una identidad de clase media. La imposibilidad de hacerlo produciría sentimientos de alienación y distanciamiento. Fue en este punto en el que las "estrategias de construcción de casa", se revelan como diversas y cambiantes.

La tensión entre una pertenencia arraigada y las rutas que se encuentran en Madrid, produjo una fragmentación y el proceso de "construcción de casa" se convirtió en una constante negociación. Algunas diferencias fueron identificadas y tenían que ver con cuestiones de: género, concepciones alrededor de clase, el estilo de vida y las oportunidades. Pero era relativo y cambió a través del tiempo. Los recién llegados, en los de en medio y los residentes

de largo tiempo tenían distintos conceptos de casa y "estrategias de construcción de casa", que son diferentes dependiendo de la escala: el cuerpo, el hogar y la comunidad.

Desde el punto de vista empírico el trabajo ha llenado algunos de los huecos que quedan en el estudio de la migración mexicana mediante la incorporación del estudio de las personas con una variedad más amplia de orígenes, al tiempo que también proporciona información sobre otros países de destino. Mediante el estudio de esta población en particular, el trabajo también ha contribuido a una mayor comprensión de los fenómenos migratorios en España.

El trabajo proporcionó información sobre las relaciones económicas, sociales y culturales entre ambos países en la era contemporánea. Trazó los canales de migración y la incorporación disponibles para la migración "de en medio" en España. Y mostró la forma en que este tipo particular de migración reconfigura la relación entre ambos países.

También se proporcionaron datos empíricos para el estudio de una porción relativamente poco estudiado de la población en movimiento: el migrante de "en medio". Y se suma a los trabajos sobre la casa y la pertenencia en el contexto de la globalización.

Nuevas líneas de investigación

En los últimos seis años han pasado muchas cosas. A lo largo de esos años, mi país, nuestro país entró en una "guerra contra las drogas", que lo ha sumergido en lo que parece ser una espiral constante de la violencia, y en 2008 el mundo comenzó a ver una las peores crisis económicas desde 1929.

España se convirtió en el tema de los titulares de los periódicos en los que se advierte al mundo de los impactos de esta crisis económica mundial. A principios de 2011, estaba en la Agencia EFE (la principal agencia de noticias en España) el día en que se anunció que más de dos mil quinientos trabajadores relacionados con la industria de la comunicación estaban a punto de perder sus puestos de trabajo. En los días subsecuentes, American Express también anunció el cierre de algunas de sus oficinas madrileñas y el envío de muchos de sus empleados a América del Sur, Inglaterra, o simplemente a la derecha en la calle.

En los últimos meses, ayudé a hacer las maletas de muchos de mis informantes, amigos cercanos y seres queridos, quienes se iban de la ciudad porque las puertas que antes parecían abiertas, fueron cerrando una por una. Madrid, la ciudad que aprendí a amar se estaba empezando a vaciar.

Como producto de la intensa interconexión y de la globalización, lo que ocurre aquí tiene un impacto directo sobre lo que sucede allí: la guerra contra las drogas, la crisis económica mundial, el reacomodo de capitales. Los lugares son y están realmente abiertos e interconectados y en efecto, vivimos en un tapiz global. Tira un extremo del hilo y la tela cambiará inmediatamente en el lado opuesto. Como agentes individuales parece tenemos poco control sobre estas cosas y, al mismo tiempo nos hacemos conscientes del hecho de que el cambio es la única constante.

En el transcurso de esta investigación, he visto cómo las apuestas del juego comenzaron a cambiar y cómo los agentes individuales comenzaron a ajustar en consecuencia. Mis primeras entrevistas se llenaron con las historias de personas que simplemente decidieron quedarse en Madrid y, por ejemplo, fueron capaces de cambiar fácilmente sus estados migratorios de estudiantes a los trabajadores. Esos eran los días. Ellos fueron los que abrieron negocios y estaban empezando a hacer una carrera. Luego la ley cambió y las trayectorias de las personas que llegaron después de 2004 se hicieron más previsibles. La mayoría de ellos tenía una rica variedad de capitales y una disposición abierta, pero se encontraban en el lugar equivocado en el momento equivocado.

Mientras todo esto ocurría, seguí haciendo mi revisión diaria de los periódicos y nuevas preguntas surgieron sin siquiera buscarlo. Las dejé para las conclusiones.

En marzo de 2011, CNN México publicó una nota bajo el título: "El número de migrantes mexicanos que salen de los EE.UU. para regresar a su casa aumenta". Dos meses más tarde, un periódico español publicó un artículo invitando a los jóvenes españoles a ir al continente Americano a probar suerte, "Vente otra vez a Latinoamérica, Pepe" les decían. Tenían el argumento de que América es un continente, principalmente de habla española, donde muchas cosas están todavía por hacer y que en España hay una generación entera de jóvenes

cualificados que se encuentran atrapados en una economía agonizante. Antes de proceder a citar a las experiencias laborales de jóvenes españoles en México, el artículo afirmaba que: "Vas a Alemania para conseguir un trabajo, pero en un ambiente que es tan estático como en España. A México o Colombia vas a crecer". En mayo de 2012, un periódico mexicano publicó otro artículo con el título de "Fuga de cerebros a la inversa, de vuelta a casa". Explicaban que en los últimos años en los Estados Unidos y Gran Bretaña se han registrado "las salidas masivas de inmigrantes incrustados en el mundo académico, hacia países como China e India, y en menor medida, Brasil, Rusia y Australia, que se remontan a sus países de origen en busca de nuevas oportunidades ".

Aparentemente las noticias apuntan a un ciclo de circulación de cerebros y la migración de retorno, que se acentúa en las condiciones actuales de crisis financiera y el reacomodo de los flujos globales de capital. Esta maquinaria neoliberal, que impulsa la flexibilidad y el movimiento se encuentra trabajando aún, no a pesar de la crisis, sino debido a ella. Y allá van, los migrantes de "en medio", tratando de reproducir una identidad de clase media, en busca de puestos de trabajo acordes a su nivel de habilidad y de lugares que cumplan con sus expectativas. Están buscando nuevos lugares para llamar a casa o simplemente regresar a una familiar. Y me pregunto cómo es ¿Que tan significativa es esta migración (nueva y de retorno? y lo que es más importante ¿Cómo va a cambiar a México?.

Mi pareja, que regresó a México hace nueve meses, me dice que está experimentando el "síndrome del Jamaicón inversa". Echa de menos Madrid y se siente completamente fuera de lugar en México. La suya, es una de las muchas voces en el país que están pidiendo un cambio. Conozco la sensación. Algunos de mis informantes que han regresado a México todavía hablan de lo mucho que extrañan Madrid y algunos de ellos, están planeando mudarse a otra parte. Uno más me envió un e-mail para decirme que "100 montaditos", el restaurante de la cadena española que le hizo sentir como en casa cuando llegó a Madrid, acaba de abrir una sucursal en la Ciudad de México. Estaba increíblemente emocionado al respecto.

Si tengo una conclusión firme acerca de la forma en que el movimiento cambia de formas individuales y colectivas de morar es que obliga a los individuos y las colectividades a

repensar sus nociones alrededor del lugar, la pertenencia y la casa u hogar. Independientemente de si las personas regresan a sus países de origen, tienen una perspectiva más crítica sobre el mismo. El cambio y el movimiento obliga a las personas y las comunidades a ver estas cosas fuera de la comodidad de un sentido de pertenencia inconsciente y familiar.

¿Hasta qué punto podemos predecir el resultado de esos cambios? No estoy segura. Puede derivar en actitudes reaccionarias como las que Duyevendak (2011) describe en los Países Bajos, donde algunos se cuelgan a una noción densa de pertenencia que incluye las raíces, una larga historia y la comprensión del lugar bajo ciertas condiciones. O puede derivar en un sentido de comunidad, *un cielo*, compuesto por pertenencias fracturadas al igual que sucede con el Madrid que experimentan los mexicanos y otros grupos de recién llegados en la ciudad. En este momento sólo estoy especulando, yo sé que un par de correos electrónicos y algunos informes de prensa no son prueba suficiente, pero tengan paciencia. Imaginemos por los siguientes párrafos que algunos de estos informes y percepciones son precisas: que muchos mexicanos están regresando del extranjero y que está entrando una nueva ola de inmigración. Hemos visto la forma en la que se ha construido la casa/hogar colectivo(a) de los mexicanos a lo largo de su historia. En virtud de las ideas de soberanía, la independencia y la libertad el proyecto de construcción de la identidad nacional presentó, al menos discursivamente, una comunidad imaginada limitada, cohesiva y firmemente arraigada en suelo mexicano. México fue el *cielo* de la "raza cósmica", pero para pertenecer uno tenía que quedarse y renunciar a expresar apego a otros lugares y épocas.

Como una comunidad imaginada, los mexicanos en el país y el extranjero, han cambiando las disposiciones hacia el Otro. ¿Cuántas palabras están ahí para describir (nos)? Malinches y jamaicones, traidores y héroes, los cholos y los pochos, los gringos y gachupines. Todos ellos, en diversos grados, tienen un sentido de pertenencia fracturado. Y esta investigación indica que una vez que se rompe nunca vuelve a su forma original.

Por un lado, si pensamos sobre los efectos que la afluencia de extranjeros tuvieron en el país durante el Porfiriato, las cosas parecen sombrías. Durante esa era, la idea era que la atracción

de inmigrantes (blancos), ricos en capital económico y cultural traerían orden y progreso, y esta política sólo profundizó la estratificación étnica y racial.

Por otro lado, esta hipotética nueva afluencia de personas se compone de mexicanos con pertenencias fracturadas. Después de todo, en la era neoliberal, el Estado ha desplegado su maquinaria ideológica para garantizar la lealtad a la nación y una disposición flexible. Además, esta afluencia parece ser desde abajo y desde el medio. ¿Van a ser tratados como traidores o como héroes?

En esta situación hipotética, hay muchas opciones. Puede haber una reacción adversa y esta idea profundamente arraigada y cerrada de pertenencia puede hacerse más fuerte y defensiva, sobre todo en el contexto de una crisis económica. Otra opción es que esta nueva afluencia de personas podría cambiar las apuestas del juego y tener una pertenencia fracturada se convertirá en una especie de capital simbólico. Hay algunos estudios sobre la migración de retorno que apuntan hacia esta opción. Una tercera opción, es que esta nueva afluencia podría fomentar una disposición abierta y tal vez permitir un cierto cambio de actitud. Tal vez, podemos esperar que las mujeres y los hombres se sientan libres para ser ellos mismos, que las actitudes racistas y clasistas serán al menos moderadas y la comunidad comenzará a aceptar la diferencia.

Lo que está claro, y estoy parafraseando a Doreen Massey para concluir, es que las comunidades se beneficiarían si miraran las cuestiones del casa/hogar y la pertenencia desde una perspectiva abierta hacia el exterior y que reconoce el hecho de que vivimos en un tapiz global.

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